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No. 6.

Published Every Week, M. J. IVERS & CO., Publishers, (James Sullivan, Proprietor.) 379 Pearl Street, New York.

Price 5 Cents. \$2.50 a Year.

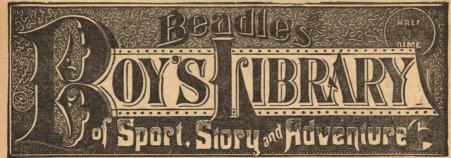
Vol. I.

## DEADWOOD DICK AS A BOY;

Or, Why Wild Ned Harris, the New England Farm-lad, Became the Western Prince of the Road,

BY EDWARD L WHEELER.





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## **DEADWOOD DICK AS A BOY;**

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## Deadwood Dick as a Boy;

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Why Wild Ned Harris, the New England Farm-lad, became the Western Prince of the Road.

BY E. L. WHEELER,
AUTHOR OF THE "DEADWOOD DICK NOVELS."

CHAPTER I.

HOW NED DIDN'T GET LEFT.

Few characters have obtained a wider notoclety than the famous Deadwood Dick, whose daring exploits touched nearly every. Western mining center, and whose record contains many a thrilling experience from boyhood to manhood, when through a force of circumstances he became outlawed and hunted as a "prince of the road," to which title he won an undoubted claim.

It is of the younger days of this extraordinary personage that we propose to treat in this sketch of his even ful career; of his after-life, up to date, much is known and has been written, so that we have no need to encroach upon his later

record.

Beset with ill-luck and strange fortune commingled, the youthful history of Ned Harris may not preve uninteresting or unprofitable to those who can profit by the moral which such a life invarially teaches.

Edward Harris came, it is stated, of a staid old New England family—farmers—who were devout and exemplary Christians of the old

school.

They worked hard and industriously through the week, but when the Sabbath came all work was laid as ite, and things had to be quiet and orderly, and each service bad to be attended at the village church.

Although people of no pretensions whatever, and of the very plainest dress, the Harris family owned one of the largest, finest and best-stocked farms adjacent to the village of Wind-

ham, and were considered very wealthy.

It will be remembered by the readers of Deadwood Lick's after life (in Beadle's Half-DIME LIBRARY) that he was not the own child of the Harries, but an adopted one, as also was his sister Anita; but we propose to take him, not as an adopted son, and follow up his career from his eleventh year, at which time he first began to develop-some of those traits which became life churacteristics.

The Harri es had no other children, and had declared Ned and Anita should be as their own

and inherit the property after them.

At the age of eleven he was one of the most advanced so olars of his age in the Windham school, and was the envy of not a few of his classmates—for he never missed a lesson, and surpassed these who were older than himself.

He was a sturdy, agile lad, possessed of good health; was always to the fore in all school-day sports, and often a participant in school-day disagreements, for he had a temper of his own, and would not allow any one to run over or insult him without challenging the offender to

fight it out.

Of all the boys who attended the school, nearly all were sons of rich or at least well-to-do families, and moved in the best social circles. Consequently, they deemed Ned Harris their inferior, and took every occasion to make him feel their superiority.

For it was no matter of secret that Ned and Anita were adopted children, and the general opinion was that they were foundlings from the

poor-house.

It was not seldom, therefore, that Ned had beggar" thrown in his face, and fun made of

him because he was Harris's cowboy.

Nevertheless, the Harrises were kind to him, and he did not mind the insults and slights so much, although the older of these aristocratic boys never gave him a chance to forget his de-

pendent position.

There were half a dozen youths of poorer families, however, who sided in with Ned, se that he was not alone; they generally played together, being excluded from the "tony" scholars' society and sports, and while they stuck by him and never deserted him, Ned Harris was not the boy to go back on them because they were poor, even at the risk of being severely thrashed by the crusty old professor, Dr. Prake, whose greatest comfort in life seemed to be in punishing his pupils and in taking snull vigorously after each chastisement.

It is probable that his tormentors would not have had the same antipathy toward Ned Harris, had his scholarly talents been in keeping with his position in life. To have a lad so much beneath them in social rank step to the front and win triumph after triumph over them in their own studies, was gall and wormwood to

hem.

Among the meanest boys in school was one Augustus Fitz Porter, the son of the moneyed man and banker of Windham, Aaron Porter.

Gus Porter, as he was commonly known, was all that was selfish, conceited, mean and spiteful; every school has its meanest boy, whose forte seems to be the disagreeable, sarcastic and overbearing, and Gus Porter reigned in that respect.

A tall, slender youth of fifteen he was, who looked as if he had grown up in a hot-house, with pale face and sharp features, to which ever clung an expression indicating his irritable and disagreeable nature; a lad who always wore the costliest clothes and best jewelry, and who was an authority among his associates on all matters pertaining to their youthful sports and pastimes, simply because he was the son of the richest man in town.

With all the strength of his mean nature he seemed to hate Ned Harris, who was by all odds a better scholar, and better-looking, despite

the fact that his attire was of the plainest order.
As to be out of the graces of Augustus Fitz
Porter meant the loss of a great many social advantages to the boys, they were obliged to follow his lead in all things, and most especially against Ned Harris, whom Porter spitefully called Hog Harris, and other pet names.

called Hog Harris, and other pet names.

Had he been some other boy, Ned would have complained to the professor, but that was not his nature. He made it a count to meet difficus-

lies as best he could, without asking favors of any one, and he did it-a trait which became a

abaracteristic in after life.

The summer term of school at the academy was to end, for a vacation, on the same day that saw Ned eleven years of age. A prize of a handsome gold watch had been offered by a philanthropic gentleman from Boston, who was stopping in the town, to that scholar whose record in studies and deportment stood the best for the term.

Of course there was excitement throughout the community as the day of closing exercises drew near, for every scholar imagined he ought to be entitled to the prize, and every family thought their representative son would surely

To the well-to-do element, it was not so much the value of the watch as the honor in winning the gift of the Bostonian, who was a man of

considerable importance.

Eager that their sons should stand well, the several mammas thereof made calls upon the Honorable Mr. Lyon, to inform him of the smartness and numerous virtues of their offsprings; of course Mr. Lyon would do everything that was fair and discreet—he was so noted for his excellent judgment, etc., etc. And the village tailor had his hands full in

manufacturing new suits for the young gentry

who were hopeful of winning the prize.

Mr. Lyon, by the way, was a keen student of nature; he saw that his proposal was begin-ting to create a jealousy and rivalry among the older as well as the younger people. Therefore, be had it announced that by a change of decision, the prize would be awarded to the scholar whose scholarly and deportment roll stood the highest, and who should write and deliver the best closing address—the merit of the addresses to be considered together with the records of the scholars.

This caused a profound sensation, and by the majority of the Windhamites, was considered fair; for it gave chance for the scholars to compete in the way of composition, as an offset against their records, should they be defi-

Of course the heads of families were put together to assist in manufacturing the most scholarly and artistic effusion, so that it was really a village rather than an academic con-

test, had the truth been known.

Ned Harris kept his own counsel, and said nothing to any one. If he had an idea of entering the contest, no one was the wiser for it. Even old Uncle Josiah Harris did not hear of it until he went to town, and when he returned home, at nightfall, he sought Ned, who was out milking.

An honest, plain old Yankee, was Uncle Josiah, and he liked Ned as well as though he

had been his own son.
"See here, Ned," he said, "they tell me a Bosting chap, called Lyon, has offered a prize fer the best composition an' record on the last day o' school, -an' it's a mighty fine gold watch

coo. I seen it up at the post-office."

"Yes, there is such a prize to be given to the cholar who has the best roll, and writes the best composition," Ned replied, with a nod. "Of course Gus Porter will get it."

"Now I'll bet the old sorrel mare on it?" Uncle Josh declared. "You're jest as smart as Porter's boy, and et would do me a powerful pile o' good to see that upstart beat. Don't ye think ye can put in yer best licks, boy, and

"I guess I can try," Ned replied, "though

you know influence goes a good ways."
"Of course, boy; but brains double discounts it. It pears that Aaron Porter knows this Bosting chap an' has been trying to get Gus a position in the Bosting feller's employ; and offered to bet the Bosting chap that his Gus is the smartest boy in the Windham school. So this Lyon takes him up, and comes on to test the matter by offering the prize. Ef Gus gits beat, they say his father will part with a snug sum of money.

Ned listened, a spirit of rivalry entering his

eyes.
"If I'm not mistaken, I stand as good a show on the roll as Gus Porter, and I'd like to beat

him, 'cause he counts himself so big."
"Well, neow, jest you put in yer best licks,
boy," Uncle Josh said, "and if you scoop the
socks off of that Porter upstart, I'll buy you a new boat for the river, providin' you won't go a-fishin' any more on Sunday."

And then the old gent limped off.

Ned spent an extra long time in milking that night, and cogitating. He was pretty sure he could make a good struggle for the prize; but when he came to look at his rather rough garments it discouraged him, for he was conscious that the elite of Windham would attend the closing exercises, and the comparison between his shabby clothes and the other boys' elegant attire would excite pretty open comment from those of the villagers who looked down upon him with envy

Still, he could not ask Uncle Josh to get him better clothing; that was something he had never done, always patiently awaiting the old

farmer's motion.

Should he let his pride interfere with an attempt to win a victory over those who considered themselves above him?

No! he would study and strive to win!

The next afternoon the examination was to take place, and the prize to be awarded.

So, that night, he went to town, and pur-chased some writing paper on which to indite his composition with a dime he had found that day in the road.

As he was coming out of the village bookstore, he came face to face with Gus Porter and

several of his cronies.

"Hello!" Porter cried, sneeringly. "There's our country rustic, Hog Harris. I say, Hog, be you going to compete for the prize? I see you have been investing heavily in stationery."

"Yes—he's going to write a poem," another boy laughed, "and call it 'The Cowboy's

Breath; or, Brains Bred in a Barn."

"Or an essay on chickens and goslings," chimed in a third.

We shall have to take orr "Of course! smelling-salts with us in order that we may le easily revived if we should be overpowered Ly the pauper's eloquence."

Ned flushed, and a spirit of resentment shome

from his eyes.

"You are as much of a pauper as i am. Gus Porter!" he cried, "and as for what these other boys say I don't care, as they're only weakkneed boobies, who are subject to your tyranny. You'll keep on with your insults till I thrash you again, as I did last winter. You know I can do it, to, if I am younger than you."

"You lie! You never whipped me," the banker's sor cried, hotly. "I merely gave in, as I didn't want my name disgraced by being

linked with a common farm boy's. I am a gentleman's son, and I never fight, except with

weapons."

"Phew! I'll bet you'd run at sight of a pis-tol," Ned replied. "As I am too much of a man to bandy words with a peevish, ill-bred rowdy, I'll bid you good-evening."

And with a cool courtesy, young Harris walked off, eaving the banker's son and his cro-

nies in a passion.

\*That fe ler's going to win the prize," Tom Maxwell said. "He stands nearer perfect than any boy in school, and he's good at composi-tion."

"I tell you, "Never!" Gus Porter gritted. boys, that vagabond shall not win the prize!"
"I don't see how you're going to help yourself," Joe Islay declared. "We can't stop the

boy from competing."
"But we can, though," Porter growled. "I'll tell you what is what, boys, and it will pay you so listen to rae."

And so the boys prepared to give audience to

their leader.

"You see " Porter went on, "the old man's got a big bet up that I'm to be the winner, and if he wins he's going to give me the dollars to go to the Thousand Islands on. Now, you boys can help me out with a scheme whereby I can win, and I'll give you an X apiece. Your vale-dictories need not be especially brilliant, and mine will be great. Then we'll lay a trap to prevent Harris from getting to the examination in time, and as a consequence I'll be declared winner. Do you agree?"

"Of course," Islay responded. "Ten dollars isn't picked up every day, and we're with you,

neart and hand.

Ned Harris went home, more determined than ever to score a victory over his tormentors, if

it lay in his power.

In the garret of the old farm-house he had a sort of a studio and work-shop combined, and in this he spent the long hours of that night in

study and writing.

When morning dawned and the breakfast-horn blew, he laid aside his pen and had the ad-

dress done to his satisfaction.

Immediately after breakfast Uncle Josh brought from a closet a handsome suit of clothes, with hat, boots and everything complete, and

gave them to astonished Ned.

"Take 'em, boy; they'll make ye look as good as any o' the boys. Mebbe it's a worldly thing fer me to do, but I want to see ye scoop the socks off from thet boy o' Porter's, who sassed me one day an' slung stones at me." With many thanks Ned received them, and

now felt jubilant, for he knew his attire would be equal to that of any boy in Windham.

After all the forenoon's work was done, he

took his new suit under his arm and went down into the woods, a mile from the farm-house, where the river was clear and deep and furnished an excellent place for bathing.

Leaving both his new and his old garments upon the high bank, he was soon in the warm stream enjoying that sport so dear to the heart of every boy—swimming—little dreaming that enemies had laid a trap for his discomfiture.

After finishing his bath, he emerged from the water in his overall bathing-suit, only to discover that both his suits of clothes were gone.

Thinking it a trick of one of the farm-hands, he searched diligently around in the woods in the vicinity of the stream, but could find nothing of either his old or his new clothing.

Finally he sat down, tired and mad.

He was too plucky to cry over such a misfortune, even though he felt vexed enough to enjoy a good cry.
"I'll bet Gus Porter has had a hand in this."

he muttered, with a knowing gleam in his eye. "He's just mean enough to do such a trick to keep me away from the examination."

The more he considered, the more positive he became that he was the victim of a plot of

young Porter's creation. What was to be done?

It was an all-important question to him, for when he came to calculate the time since he had left the farm-house, he knew it must be already noon.

It was two miles to the academy, and the afternoon closing exercises were to begin at

sharp one o'clock

With an exasperating cry, he arose and re-

newed the search.

If he failed to find his clothes, should he go in his scanty bathing-suit, at all hazards? Or should he give up all hope of winning the prize, and go home for repairs?

He was busy turning these thoughts over in his mind, as he wandered about, when he reached a muddy, swampy lot, and spied his new suit lying upon the ground.

On nearer approach he perceived, to his indignation, that they were utterly ruined.

They had first been literally slit and torn with some sharp instrument, and then had been dip ped in the muddy rust-water of the swamp, and the mud plastered upon them.

For a minute or so Ned was speechless with anger; but his greatest disappointment came when he searched the pockets, and found that

his valedictory had been stolen.

He was so indignant and astonished, that he could not give vent to his feelings, in words, for some time; then it was only in a decision characteristic of the boy.

"I'll be blamed if I'm beat, yet!" he cried, with flashing eyes. "If they take me for a 'got-left'-er, they'll soon find out the difference."

And with this declaration, he proceeded to dress himself up in his ruined garments.

A most sorry-looking specimen of humanity he was, when once arrayed, but there was a shrewd, resolute twinkle in his eyes, that made him look really handsome, despite the filthy and muddy condition of his clothing.

As soon as he was dressed, he set out for the village as rapidly as possible, feeling by no means comfortable, but resolute in his purpose of letting it be known the trick that had been played on him, even if he failed to win the prize.

The gathering that afternoon at the academy was large, the elite of the village being prominently represented, and there was a bustle of excitement among the assemblage so anxious to know who was to be entitled to the Boston gentleman's gift, which was really an elegant

At promptly one o'clock the school was called

to order, and the roll called.

Ned Harris and Gus Porter were absent, and so in arranging the programme of valedictories. they were placed last on the list.

Porter, attired in the hight of fashion, soon after entered, and then the roll of honor was read, to the eagerly listening spectators.

Fitz Augustus Porter's mention came last but one, and his record excelled any of his class-

mates with one exception.

Edward Harris, said Dr. Drake, was the only attendant of the Academy who stood wholly perfect in excellence in studies, honorable de-portment during school hours, and regular attendance, which, considering that Master Harris resided over two miles out of town, and spent his out-of-school hours in work, entitled him to the highest mention.

Sensation! Murmurs, elevations of noses, and expressions of disgust, were on every hand

prevalent.

But order was called, and valedictory after

valedictory was read. Hon. Mr. Lyon sat and listened, with a sober, thoughtful expression of countenance, but made no remark to show that he thought one valedictory better than another

Until Fitz Augustus Porter took the stand and began his address; then a pleased expres-

sion came upon the Bostonian's face.

It was a fine composition, showing talent and feeling, couched in well chosen words; it was teniold better and more appropriate than anything that had been delivered before.

And young Porter received the applause which followed his effort with a complacent boy, feeling fully assured that victory was his.

Master Edward Harris not being present,"

began the professor—
"Hold up, a bit! I am here!" Ned cried, at "If you this juncture, bursting into the room. please, professor, I was delayed and could not get here sooner, and, as I have lost my compo-sition, I wish to have my name struck from the

competitive list."

"That is quite unnecessary, my lad," the Honorable Mr. Lyon said, arising, and smiling at Ned's ridiculous appearance. "Ladies and gentlemen, the address just read was composed by this lad. He went in bathing this forenoon, leaving his clothing upon the shore. Soon after, Master Porter here crept up and stole the garments, and made off with them. Being a chance witness to the act, I followed, and saw Porter and several confederates mutilate the boy's clothing, as you now behold it, and Por-ter extracted Master Harris's valedictory, say-ing he would read it himself. Then I came away, keeping my own counsel, until this opportunity to shame the guilty rivel!"

CHAPTER II. A SHREWD SUSPICION.

IT is unnecessary to state that Ned Harris got the watch, while the exercises broke up in great confusion, the Porter element of the assemblage beating a hasty and indignant retreat, and taking the guilty ones with them, their pride

greatly humiliated.

The watch was not all that Ned received.

The Henorable Mr. Lyon handed him, with the watch, a fifty-dollar note, and his card, saying: "My lad, I have more admiration for your grit and your talent than I can express, and should you ever come to Boston, I shall be pleased to see you."

And after that, Ned never saw his friend

from Boston again.

With the fifty dollars he purchased himself a neat, but less costly, suit of clothes, and had

some money left.

That night, Aaron Porter drove down to the Harris farm-house, and was overwilling to settle for his son's "boyish mischief," as he termed it. "We are all liable to errors, you know," he

added, patronizingly.
"Yas; I know we aire," answered Uncle
Josh, for once, in his anger, forgetting his

Christian precepts. "This error, as ye call it, will cost ye just a

hundred dollars, or your upstart young-'un goes ter ther calaboose quicker'n thunder!"
Of course Aaron Porter paid the demand, secretly congratulating himself that he could

avert further family disgrace so cheaply.

From that day Ned was held in higher esteem by at least a few of those who had formerly snubbed him, for they were heartily ashamed of young Porter.

But they were destined not to have Ned long among them, either to like or disike. From that day of his ill-luck and good-luck, there opened out and developed a series of rapid inci-

dents that marked a busy life.

It was during the summer vacation, one day, that an oily-faced individual, drove up to the farm-house, and announced himself as Selden Rossitur, stating that he was buying up farm produce and stock, for a firm in Boston, naming parties with whom Josiah Harris had had considerable dealing.

So, having some produce and stock to sell, the farmer at once drove a bargain with the stranger, selling him sixty dollars' worth, for which Mr. Rossitur wrote out a check on the

Boston firm.

"I'll write out a receipt," he said, producing a piece of blank paper and a pencil, "and you can sign it-just to show the firm, you know, what I've bought of you."

"This check is good, I suppose?" uncle Josh demanded, ever careful, but not suspicious in

the present case.

"Oh! certainly-good as the bank on which it is drawn. I dare say you have a bank account in your town bank, where you can deposit it, or get it cashed, the firm being well known.

"Yas, I do business over in P-, at the First National. I guess it will be all right."

Rossitur wrote out the receipt, but managed to break off the point of his pencil just as he Anished the last word.

"Ah! there—that's too bad. Pencils are a muisance. But, it don't matter;—I have a fountain pen, here; you can just sign the receipt, and then I'll bid you good-day. You can have the stuff over at P-- by a couple of days from

"Yas. I'll take it over to morrow," Josh answered, signing his name to the receipt, in his peculiar hand, and then bowing the agent out.

Now Ned had been a witness to the whole transaction, without saying anything, but as soon as the agent was gone, he said:

"Fap, I'll bet a cookie you're sold!"

"Humph! how so?" Uncle Josiah growled.
"Didn't I get enough?"
"Yes—too much," Ned replied. "If I am

not mistaken, that check isn't worth a fig, nor is that chap agent for - & Co., of Boston. Uncle Josh looked serious.

He had great faith in Ned's judgment, having found it ever reliable.

"If not, as you say, what's the infernal scalawag up to, then, boy! He surely knows I couldn't ship the stuff to Bosting, except he was in P—, to receive it."

"That ain't his game!" Ned replied, excited-"I suspicioned his game, even before he left. That receipt was written in lead pencilyour name or signature, in ink, lawfully. How easy to rub out the light pencil writing, and draw up a note in ink! Tento one, if you go to the bank to-morrow, you'll find a note of your giving has just been brought in and you'll have to pay it, too!"
Josiah Harris leaped to his feet with an ejacu-

lation of astonishment.

"Boy, you're right, and you're cuter than Christmas!" he cried. "Jest you jump onter Bay Billy, an' start fer P-quicker'n scat, an' ef you get in ahead of that scamp, I'll let ye go to Bosting to spend the Fourth."

Now Ned wanted to do this very thing, but the promise gave him no particular impetus, for

he was ever ready to do anything for Uncle Josh, as he was called, the county over. So putting on his best clothes, hastily, he mounted Bay Billy, who had been brought to the door, and was soon flying toward P-, ten miles away.

There were two direct roads which led to the town. Rossitur had taken one, so Ned Harris

took the other.

In all that county, there was no better rider than Ned, who seemed born to the saddle, and the horse he rode had made a record of three minutes, which was remarkable time in those

And less than three-quarters of an hour after leaving home, Ned Harris stood in the First Na-tional Bank of P——, eager and breathless.

## CHAPTER III. FETCHING A FORGER.

The bank cashier at once recognized Ned, having frequently seen him at the bank in company with Uncle Josh, and nodded, pleasantly. "Well, Master Harris, you seem to be somewhat flustered," he said, observingly. "Have you been riding fast?"

"Well, I guess so," Ned replied, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. "Bay Billy tetched me over from home in three-quarters 36

an hour, and he didn't sweat a hair. note been presented here against Josiah Harris, to-day?"
"Not to my knowledge, Master Harris," and

the cashier looked over some papers behind the screen. "Nothing of that sort to-day, sir." "Well, that don't signify," Ned said, nothing put out. "There's goin' to be a forged note presented here to-day, purporting to have been drawn by him, and the one that presents it will want it cashed. I want you to refuse payment, as it is a forgery, all except father's signature.

Then Ned related about the drawing of the receipt and his suspicion that it was nothing more than the opening key to a forgery."

"I should not be surprised if you were right," the cashier, Mr. Brown, said. "You're a cute one, at any rate, to have suspicioned such a thing. Not one boy in a thousand would have thought of it."

He then mentioned the matter to the president of the bank, who was an aged, white-headed gentleman, and who surveyed Ned

critically.

"Keep the lad here until we see if there is anything in it," he said. "I've heard of the dodge before, somewhere in the East, but not around here."

So Ned was given a seat behind the screen and handed some papers to look at while he

waited.

It lacked two hours of the time when the bank closed up its daily business, so that there was ample time for Mr. Selden Rossitur to put in an appearance yet, which Ned was glad of.
In about an hour the "agent" entered the
bank and approached the cashier's window,

where he handed in a card.
"Rossitur—Selden Rossitur, junior—partner of — & Co., Boston!" he said, in a businesslike way.

"Ahl yes; happy to meet you, Mr. Rossitur," the cashier responded. "We have had some dealings with your firm. Is there anything we

can do for you to-day?"

"Well, yes-that is if you are agreeable," Rossitur answered, extracting a piece of paper from his pocket-book. "I took a note from an old farmer back in the country, and he said I could likely get it cashed here, where he did business."

"What! Josiah Harris?" the cashier said, picking up the note, "and for a thousand dollars, too! Why, what's Harris been doing to

that extent?"

"Oh! I've been selling him a patent-right, and not having a bank check by him, he wrote out the note for thirty days. I presume you've no objections to cashing it—say, give me nine hundred dollars for it."
"I will see!" Mr. Brown said, stepping into

an adjoining apartment.

In a few seconds he returned.

"Mr. Rossitur, it will be impossible for us to accommodate you," he said, "inasmuch as the law wants a man of about your size for forgery!"

And, even as he spoke, Rossitur was seized by a policeman from behind, and handcuffed.
"Hold on! What is the meaning of this out-

rage?" the alleged Bostonian cried, hotly.
"It means that I were too previous for your

cfroumstance, Johnny!" Ned Harris cried, emerging from behind the screen. "It's a cold day when Josiah Harris gives thousand-dollar notes for patent rights!"

So complete was the forger's astonishment, that he could not give vent to further expres-

sion, as he was led out,

From that day Ned Harris became famous all over the country, for the papers applauded him greatly for his shrewdness in detecting and arresting the fraud, and he was literally in every one's mouth.

But it is ever so that when one's prospects seem the brightest there is almost sure to come some misfortune or ill-luck to blight them.

Good as his word, Uncle Josh gave him a goodly sum of pocket money, and bought him a ticket for Boston, that he might go and spend

the Fourth of July at the Hub.

Now Ned had never been in a larger city than P—, but he was satisfied that he could do Boston without any trouble, having a good deal of faith in his ability to take care of him-

But when he arrived in the city, Fourth of July morning, he found everything very much unlike what it was in Windham and P—, and a sense of loneliness took possession of him as he wandered about the staid city.

He had forgotten the address of Mr. Lyon, who had befriended him, at the school contest, and consequently knew no one in the whole big

town.

During his rambles he bought himself a walking-stick, as the brick and stone walks made his

feet sore and legs weary.

Without noticing where he was going, he wandered into one of the rough streets of the city, where a most villainously ragged and dirty set of mortals dwelt.

Children swarmed in the street, which was filthy and ill-smelling, and degraded and bleareyed mortals were seen in nearly every doorfor the most part intoxicated.

way, for the most part intoxicated.
"The sooner I get out of here, the better I'll be off, I guess," Ned muttered, quickening his footsteps. "It's a hard den."

But he was destined not to get out without

having trouble.

He came to where there was an evident family fight going on, upon the sidewalk in front of a

rickety old tenement.

An old red-nosed bummer lay stretched out upon the sidewalk, either insensible or dead drunk, while an aged and fragile-looking old woman was fighting a burly young fellow with a bull-dog countenance, and on account of her age and infirmity, was getting the worst of the battle, for her eyes were blacked, and nose bloody.

Just as Ned came up, the burly rough struck ber a terrible blow in the face that knocked her

back upon the door steps.

Ned Harris was not used to such sights, and it stung him to madness to see a woman abused in this manner; so he sprung forward and con-

Fronted the young bully, with flashing eyes.

"For shame!" he cried, with a sternnessolder than his years. "Have you no manhood,
that you thus strike a weak old woman?"

The young bully glared at Ned a moment. in

evident astonishment as if at loss to understand how so young a lad as he dare interfere.

"Hello! what business you got to lip in, ore," he cried, savagely. "Get out, you rat, here," he cried, savagely. or I'll carve you and throw ye in the sewer!"

And drawing an ugly knife from under his

coat, he made a lunge at the boy

"No you don't, my friend," Ned cried, leaping lightly to one side. "I'll thump you on the head for that."

And, quick as a flash he raised his walking stick, and gave the young ruffian & rap beside the head that felled him to the ground, insensible-much to Ned's alarm, too, for he had not intended to do this.

"Och! howly murther! the young omadhaun has kilt me Jimmy!" cried the pattered-up woman, springing from the doorstops, frantic-

ally.
"Polace! polace! murther! murtler!"
"Polace! polace! murther! murtler!" "Shut up, you fool!" cried Ned. "I've only been befriending you. What do you mean by turning on me?"

"Och! polace! polace!" shrieked the woman, louder and louder, and a moment later around the corner popped two cops, and ere he was scarcely able to comprehend matters, Ned was seized and marched away, under arrest.

Although it was not a situation le had ever dreamed of getting in, he was too plucky to cry over matters, and strode along with as much indifference as possible, only sorry that he hadn't given the bully a harder crack, since he had to suffer arrest for it, anyhov.

Into the station-house he was concucted, and locked up, to await a hearing the ner t morning. It was a dreary day he passed, and he won-

dered how it was all to end

He knew that the folks at home to k a Boston daily paper, and while he was not expected home for a week, they and other Windhamites would be more than likely to see a mention of his arrest in the papers.

What a sensation it would creat, and how

the folks at home would worry over it!

The thought was almost maddening to him, and he resolved never to give his real name, when it came to his examination.

The next morning he had a hearing before "His Honor," and there gave his name as Dick Dante, and his place of residence Brooklyn.

A motley gang of roughs of both sexes were present, including the old woman, all of whom gave unblushing testimony that the prisoner had come strutting through the street, calling folks names, and finally knocked Jin my Dugan down with a stick and then blacking Mrs. Dugan's eyes, as his Honor could see

Ned listened in horror. He had never heard such a string of false swearing before, in his life, and when he put in a plea of "not guilty" it was greeted with a shout of derision, and the crier had to call order, after which hurried "trial" "His Honor" sentenced the prisoner

to six months in the county jail!

Ned was not astonished, at this. After hearing the lying testimony offered against him, he expected that he would get two or three years, at the least-his own testimony being wholly unsupported.

If he had had a hundred dollars, he could

mave paid his fine and got free-but as he lacked that sum, nothing remained for him but to submit to being taken to the jail. For he was now fully resolved to never let it be known at home what disgrace he had got into, but 'grin and bear it.

Such was his pride, that he would have worked out a five years' term, rather than that his schoolmates at Windham should know of his

That night saw him installed in a little cell at the combined fail and workhouse, under lock and key, and all the furniture he had for his new home was an iron cot-bed, straw-mattress, and one chair-but that was enough for his wants.

The next morning he was deprived of his own garments and habited in a striped outfit, and his hair was clipped in the most approved style.

He was then given a choice of the trades he preferred to learn, and expressing a preference for the boot and shoe department, he was set to work at rough-soleing in a room where fully one hundred and fifty other prisoners were at work.

It was a new phase of life, to him, and he did not get discouraged, at first; but when a month

of tedious labor had passed by, he heartly wished himself back on the farm.

"An' I'll bet a peggin' awl I won't stay in here, long, either," he mused, one night, as he sat alone in his dungeon. "If I'm not mistaken I have detected the approach of a mutiny, and there's going to be a grand effort for escape made, when every one is unsuspecting of it. It remains for me to keep my eyes open.

> CHAPTER IV. OUT OF DURANCE

FROM the hour of his making this resolve, Ned Harris kept his eyes and ears more widely open than before. He had not been in the place a week ere he had discovered that there was a system of hammer-telegraph among them, by which they secretly conversed, unbe-known to the lynx-eyed watchman. There would be a momentary lull in the hammering process; then some one in a distant part of the room would pound a series of telegraphic taps, which would be answered first by one workman, and then another.

As Ned was soon given a position as laster, he had more quiet, and chance to note this fact. At first he paid no particular attention to the thumping, but the more he thought of it, the more convinced he was that it was understood by numbers of the men and conveyed definite words or ideas and undoubtedly related to plans for their effort for escape. The expect-ant expressions upon the faces of many, convinced him of this; and always after a message had evidently been delivered, every hammer in the room would pound away in chorus, as if to ward off suspicion of the nature of the previous signal taps.

The prisoners in Ned's section were evil. brutal-looking roughs, who appeared capable of any devilment, and it became evident to the boy that they had nearly all of them taken a dislike to him, for some cause, as on frequent oceasions chunks of sole-leather his him in the face; but when he would look around, no one appeared to know anything about it.

There was no way but to bear these insults, for talking or speaking was punishable with solitary confinement; and Ned was too gritty to make complaint to the superintendent

Thus two months of his term wore monotonously along, but the boy prisoner never ceased

to be vigilant and watchful while he worked.

And it was far from boy's work he had to do.

A certain number of boots and shoes were given him to last per day, and to fail to accom-plish the work meant to get a blow beside the head and two days at solitary confinement in

So, unwilling to take the penalty, he worked desperately, and barely succeeded in finishing

his allotted number of pieces per day.

The third month of his life in the penitentiary rolled around and found him still pegging away and lasting at his bench.

But he was not long to remain in the shoe-

shop.

One day, while working industriously, a hard piece of leather hit him in the face, causing him great pain for the instant.

Looking quickly up, he was in time to see a demoniac expression of triumph upon the face of an Irishman, Mike Donahue by name, who sat but a few benches away.

Indignant and quick-tempered, Ned could no longer resist the temptation to retaliate and quickly hurled his hammer at Donahue.

Straight between the eyes it hit the Irishman,

and dropped him, insensible.

It was an unlucky act for Ned, for he was at once taken from the work-room, and confined in a cell.

For the next forty-eight hours, he was given nothing to eat or drink, then he was taken from his cell and at his request went before the superindendent, where he related the insults that had been the cause of his hitting Donahue.

"I also wish to inform you that a plot is brewing among the shoemakers, to break jail, he said, also relating what observations he has made from time to time, including the discovery

of the telegraphic signal system.

The superintendent was a gruff, stern old delegate, whose long knowledge of criminal characteristics had made him suspicious of every one; still he listened to what Ned had to say, with a grim sort of p tience, reading the boy through and through, with his eagle glance. When Ned bad finished, he said:

"I will give the matter attention, sir. mean time you will finish the balance of your term in the blacksmith shop; and if you hope to get free at the expiration of your sentence, you had best conduct yourself more careful in the future."

And so Ned was put in the smithy and made

to run a trip-hammer.

It was hot work and a hot summer, and he found himself wishing he was back in the cool shoe-shop. But it does the inmates of a peni-

tentiary little good to wish.

One week of this work, and Ned found himself once more back in his cell "bushed." Overwork and heat had so preyed upon him that he had fainted, and was returned to his cell to

"mend."

And it was a full week ere he felt able to go

to work again.

Visitors' days at the penitentiary occurred Tuesday and Friday, and large numbers of country people always came in to see the sights of the "work'us!"

Many times the city folks also made the peni-

tentiary a call.

Every day that brought visitors was a com-

bined dread and pleasure to Ned. In one way he dreaded the day, fearing that among the visitors would be some of his former acquaintances, who would recognize him. In another way it was pleasure, because he saw so many happy faces, and one in particular, which was never lacking, and which he learned to look

for as eagerly as he did his meals.

This face belonged to the superintendent's daughter, Dora, a sprightly, kind-hearted miss of fifteen, who ever had for Ned a pleasant

smile.

During his sickness, she twice passed his cell. among the crowd, and each time managed to slyly slip a note in through the grates, which Ned was in no wise loth to peruse, whenever he got a chance to do so unobserved.

The first note read:

"Keep up courage, and look forward to a good Dora." life after you get free.

The second note read:

"MASTER DICK: Papa has discovered what you told him about, and taken precautions. I am talking for your pardon. DORA."

The following Sunday, when the superintendent made a tour of inspection of the penitentiary, Dora accompanied him, and smiled in at Ned, which did him more good than the bread and gruel he had just eaten.

When it came Monday again, Ned was forced to resume work at the forge, but he went to his task willingly, little realizing that it was his

last day but one in the penitentiary

On Tuesday came a considerable crowd of

visitors, both curious and critical.

While one out of ten betrayed evident sympathy for the overworked prisoners, the other nine invariably showed by their looks that their feelings for the prisoners were those of disgust or indifference.

Among the last to come of that Tuesday's vis-

itors was pretty Dora.

In her company was a tall young man of the wealthy hot-house species, in whose face was not enough color to make a blush on the cheek.

Just as they were approaching Ned's trip-hammer, where he was forging a heavy piece of steel, a large spark from a neighboring anvil lodged in Miss Dora's gauzy white dress.

Being at white heat the spark, set the filmy

fabric instantly on fire and it almost at once

burst into a flame.

Dropping his work, Ned seized a heavy wiping blanket which lay handy, and leaping for-ward, soused it in a tub of water and then wrapped it around and around her, before the flames had done her any harm, except to her clothing.

It was a timely act, and saved her from great

suffering, if not a worse fate.

As soon as she could recover from her affright,

Dora thanked Ned gratefully, and, followed by

her milk-faced companion, left the prison.

So Ned worked the day out, and the next morning the warden and superintendent visited his cell, and handed him in everything that had been taken from him, at the time of his coming

to the workhouse."
"Master Dante," the superintendent said, "being favorably impressed with your actions, and believing you the victim of an unjust sentence, I have succeeded in securing your pardon, as part reward for your brave act it sav-ing my daughter's life. Your money is all in your clothes, and I sincerely hope you may safely reach home, and never have the bad luck to get into prison again."

Overwhelmed was Ned, with gratitude, but not so much so but what he could thank the superintendent, kindly, and also send his sincere regards to pretty Miss Dora, to whom he felt

sure he owed his liberation.

Then Ned resumed his own habiliments, and an hour later stood without the prison walls,

What was he to do now? was the perplexing

question that now troubled him.

Should be return to the farm? If so, how could be account for his absence, truthfully, without betraying where he had been? The only way he knew of was by refusing to answer any questions whatever.

Even then, he knew it would not be advisable

to return home until his hair grew out.

Nothing, then, remained, but to strike out for some point where work was plenty, and then hire out.

So he purchased a ticket for Philapelphia, and was soon after speeding away toward the

Quaker City.

Arrived there, he was not long in finding employment, at driving a delivering-wagon, and continued at this business two years and three months, in all this time never writing to or hearing from the folks at home.

At the expiration of this time, being seized with an irresistible desire to see the old people, he packed up his few effects and set out for Windham, which he reached in safety.

Judge the surprise and joy when he walked into the farm-house and introduced himself; for being now nearly fourteen years of age, he had grown taller and changed considerably during his absence—so much, in fact, that at first they did not recognize him.

The next year of Ned Harris we will pass over as being uneventful; but the succeeding winter, in January, a calamity befell him that left him in a more emphatic sense upon the world

than ever before.

Not far fro " the Harris farm-house was a little lake, which, owing to the fact of its almost fathomless depth-no bottom ever having been found in the center—was called Bottomless Lake.

In the winter time, when it was frozen over, it was the custom of the farmers to drive over it, as it somewhat shortened the route to P-

One day Uncle Josh Harris and his wife, accompanied by the latter's brother and his son, started for P— on business.

It was bitter cold. but the quartette were

comfortably wrapped up in buffalo-robes, and

the horses were in the best of spirits.

"Well, Ned," Uncle Josh said, in his goodnatured way, "if I never come back, everything is yours and Anita's, and Uncle Alex,
here, will be your guardian and help you to

manage things till you get of age."

Ned laughed, and said "All right." He had known the honest old farmer to say the same thing at least a hundred times before; it was a

habit of his whenever he started off.

"Heaven forbid that Alex Filmore ever be-comes our guardian," Ned said to thirteen-year-old Anita, a bright little miss with understanding far beyond her years, after they had gone. "With all his reputed goodness, I cannot like him, and can but believe that he would be a hard man to get along with."

It was not an hour afterward that a farmer drove up and shouted to Ned that Josiah Harris and his wife had been drowned in the lake,

Jumping into the sleigh, they drove swiftly to the spot and out nearly to its center, where a crowd of neighbors had already collected. Here was a large hole in the ice, where the sleigh, horses and the farmer and his wife had

gone down forever beneath the cold waters.

Alex Filmore and his son, Clarence, had leaped from the sleigh, they stated, barely in time to save their own lives.

Great excitement prevailed, and holes were cut in the ice, but nothing could be found of the

bodies of the unfortunates.

Ned was the coolest one in the crowd, but his was a wild, unnatural calmness.

Upon the ice at the edge of the hole was a little pool of blood, which, the Filmores stated, had come from a cut in one of the horses' legs,

as they endeavored to get free.

"Alex Filmore!" Ned cried, gazing at the elder sternly and accusingly, "I don't believe it.
I believe that you murdered father and mother when they tried to get out of the air-hole in the

ice!"

CHAPTER V. AS GOOD AS HIS WORD.

OF course Ned's blunt declaration added to the excitement, and the neighbors censured him for thinking such a thing of Mr. Filmore, who was conceded by those who knew him to be a

good man, as he was a church deacon.
"Poor boy, he knows not what he says," the elder Filmore said, "or else I should take it more to heart. He is, I have no doubt, de-ranged by this awful accident." "You lie! I am just as sane as you are!" Ned

cried, "and you shall find it out, too."

But Ned's wrath against the Filmores did not add to his good reputation in the neighborhood: indeed, all his former acquaintances rather turned against him for his seeming viciousness, while he became more and more convinced that the Filmores were working hard to establish it as a fact in the minds of every one, that he, Ned, was not in his right mind.

All but Anita may have believed this, but

she clung to her brother lovingly.

Resolved to conduct himself with as much de-corum as practicable, Ned raised no fuss, when the Filmores moved in, bag and baggage, until Clarence Filmore commenced the war.

From early childhood Ned had always had the large front room in the right wing of the farm-house, which was one of the most pleasant in the dwelling. Anita had the room just ad-

joining.

The day after the Filmores "moved in,"

The day after the Filmores "moved in," Clarence Filmore, who was a youth of seventeen, walked into Ned's room, where the latter was engaged in writing a letter, and gazed

about, critically.

"You will have to move your traps out of here," he said, authoritatively, "for I'm going to take possession of this room. You can get along with the attic chamber very comfortably."

Ned's blood boiled in a minute.

"Well, I guess not," he retorted, calmly.
"This has always been my room, and I've got
the biggest kind of a notion I shall keep it, too."

"Oh, no you won't," young Filmore sneered, beginning to carry furniture out into the hall. "Father said I could have it, and father knows

his biz."
"I'd like to know if your father is going to run this whole business!" Ned cried, springing to his feet. "Just you let the things alone, here, Clarence Filmore, or I'll pitch you down stairs!"

This looked like a vain boast, for the intruder was a good deal larger than Ned, and he

was a good dear larger than Iron, and Iron, langued tauntingly.

"Oh, will you?" he sneered, making a lunge at Ned, and attempting to strike him. But Ned was not so easily downed, and seizing young Filmore, he forced him backward from the room, and pitched him head-foremost down the short flight of stairs.

The only wonder was that the unfortunate son of his father did not get his neck broken in his dangerous tumble, but he was lucky enough to escape with a peeled nose and two of his

front teeth knocked out.

Suffice to say he did not come up-stairs again

that day-nor the next.

But, two of the farm hands pounced in upon Ned, unexpectedly, and taking him to the barn, held him, while Alex Filmore gave him an unmerciful whipping with a rawhide whip.

Ned stood the ordeal without a whimper, but his pale face and flashing eyes betrayed the strength of his indignation, and even while receiving the painful punishment, he registered a terrible vow of vengeance, which was afterward executed in one of the lonely mountain gulches of the Black Hills.\*

From thence, on, whirpings were frequent, both Ned and Anita being the recipients.

Once in the dead of night, Ned Harris awoke to find Alex Filmore standing over him, with a large bottle in his hand, and a spoon.

That his intention was to poison him Ned had

no doubt.

Immediately upon discovering that the boy

was awake, Filmore beat a hasty retreat.

Again, another night, Ned was awakened in time to see Filmore and his son silently enter the room, armed with a bottle, sponge and

That it was their purpose to drug and make way with him, he had no doubt, and drawing a

<sup>6</sup> See No. 1, Beadle's Half-Dime Library.

pistol from under his pillow, which he now always kept ready, he fired upon them, and put

them to flight.

Awakening Anita, he told her what had twice happened, and viving her all the money he had saved up—over two hundred dollars, in amount—he coaxed her to dress and fly to a place of

Ready to abide by Ned's judgment, the brave child parted with her brother in the dead of the night, trudged on foot to P—, and the next morning took the train for Chicago, where one of her schoolmates lived, by whom she knew she would be welcomed, until Ned came for her.

Ned was resolved to stay at home and fight it

but on that line awhile longer at least.

In the morning, however, following Anita's departure, three men drove over from Windham and asked for Mr. Edward Harris. On his tasking his appearance he was at once pounced upon by two of the men and bound hand and foot, after which he was carried into the farmhouse, where the third man, whom Alex Filmore called "Doctor," proceeded to make an examination of Ned's head, physiognomy, etc., which, when completed, caused him to nod knowingly to the elder Filmore:

"Yes, the boy is crazy," he said, "and will constantly grow more and more violent, unless properly treated. You had better keep him confined for a couple of days, when I will come for him and take him to my private asylum, back in the country, and doctor him up."

CHAPTER VI.

Now many a boy would have been truly appalled at such a situation, and it is not for use to say that Ned Harris did not feel somewhat "blue,"

But, endowed with indomitable grit and pluck, Ned was the last lad in the world to sit lown and mope over any misfortune; there was no consolation in that, as he well knew, and instead of giving up to despondency, he always turned his thoughts upon the subject of how he was to get out of the dilemma.

He knew that he was the victim of a diabolical plot on the part of the Filmores, and that all he could say would be of no avail, as it would be judged as further evidence of his alleged insanity; so he resolved to say as little as possible, and watch his chance to escape.

He was taken to his room and locked in, and one of the farm hands placed on guard in the hall, and another on the outside of the house, thus pretty effectually providing against his ascape.

At noon the two Filmores entered his room, bringing him his dinner, which consisted of bread and water.

"Well, how are you feeling now?" the elder

Filmore asked, maliciously.

"I'm feeling as if I'd like to punch your head for you, you scurvy old villain!" Ned responded. "You'll get paid for this, Alex Filmore."

"Undoubtedly you are right," was the answer, "for should you outlive your term in the insane asylum, I shall throw in a bill against this estate for your maintenance and support.

If you should die, I inharit the property any-how."

"So I presume," Ned retorted; "and it was this which caused you to wantonly murder your own sister and her husband!"

"Alas! I am sorry to see you so insane, my lad; but I suppose we are all subject to sudden misfortunes."

misfortunes."

"You'll be subject to something besides misfortune, if I ever get free and get my grip on

you!" Ned cried.

That night he made an attempt to escape, having got free of his bonds, but was recaptured,

and placed in a room without windows.

The next day the doctor and his assistants came for the purpose of taking him to the

asylum.

His feet were loosed so that he could walk to the carriage, but his hands were kept strapped

behind his back.

After placing him in the hack, the doctor

and his assistant also got in, while the third man mounted the box to drive. And it was in this style that Ned once more

took leave of his country home, It was a dull, gloomy ride, the country being

white with snow, and the wind blowing flercely, and drifting the snow badly.

Ned kept his gaze averted from that of his

Ned kept his gaze averted from that of his captors, and refused to talk; but through the glass window of the coach he noted every inch of the country they traversed.

About noon the carriage drew up in front of

About noon the carriage drew up in front of a tavern, and the doctor and his two tools got out and entered, probably to get something to drink.

Ned's heart beat wildly. Now was his chance

for escape, if at all—but how?

He was shut up in the closed vehicle, and without the use of his hands he could neither open the door, nor defend himself.

He was wondering what was best to do, when the horses which had been left untied, got scared at the creaking sign, and with snorts of affright, dashed away down the country road, at the top of their speed.

"Now, then, I am in for it" Ned muttered.
"Like as not there'll be a general smash up, and I'll get the worst of it. I must somehow get my hands free."

It was easier said than done. They were securely bound behind his back with leather straps, and all his efforts to liberate them proved unavailing.

On, on dashed the horses, as fast as they could run, and looking back toward the tavern, Ned saw the doctor and his two comrades giving chase on foot, and could not help laughing at

At the rate the horses were going they were not likely to overtake them in several months at least, should the horses keep up their gait, which they bade fair to do, as they were spirited animals and very hadly frightened.

animals and very badly frightened.
Finding there was no hope of getting his hands free, Ned crouched down with his back to the door, but found himself unable to open it. So he sunk upon the cushions to await whatever denouement might come. What the end would be he could not guess. But it came sooner than he looked for.

After running fully five miles, the tired horses

slackened their gait to a walk, and were shortly afterward stopped by a farmer, who peered into the carriage and then opened the door.
"Waal, waal!" he ejaculated, on seeing Ned.

"What's the matter-bin highway robbery,

boy!"
"Looks like it, don't it!" Ned said, getting
out on the ground. "If you'll undo my hands
out on the ground. "If you'll undo my hands and tell me the nearest place I can find a sheriff,

I'll be much obliged."
"Sartin," the farmer said, releasing Ned. "I reckon ye'll find the sheriff at B—, two miles from here; he's thar to-day, attendin' a sheriff's sale, ef ye hurry up."

Thanking him, Ned climbed upon the driver's box, and picking up the reins and wheeling them about, drove back toward home like mad, leaving his rescuer staring after him in open-

mouthed amazement.

Not far from the tavern he met the doctor and his two men, and although they made a desperate attempt to stop the rapidly-driven conveyance, they were unsuccessful, and Ned rode on in triumph until he was not far from home.

Here he dismounted, turned the team around and started them back toward the tavern, while he cut across lots, on foot, and hurried toward

the farm-house.

"One more visit to the old home," he mut-tered, "then I'll forever bid adieu to this part of the country. There's money in the safe, and it is mine, and shall be mine to-night."

> CHAPTER VII. A HANGING DELEGATE.

After securing the contents of the old safe, in the Harris farm-house, which amounted to over a thousand dollars, he fled to Chicago, but could find nothing of Anita. The Doles, with whom she had intended to stop, had moved into Nebraska, near Omaha, and Ned concluded that Anita had gone in search of them, for he knew that she was a plucky girl, and would not turn

back, when he had said go ahead.

After a week spent in seeing the sights in Chicago, Ned resolved to go on further west, and invest what money he had in land.

While sauntering along Dearborn street one day, he spied a placard upon a bulletin board in front of a real estate broker's office, which read:

"For Sale, Cheap!

A large, well-watered, well-timbered ranch in yoming territory, near Cheyenne. Inquire Wyoming within."

Thinking it possible that he might drive a bargain, Ned stepped in and made inquiries, and was immediately collared and chaired by a meek, sleek-tongued individual, who proceeded to describe the place in question, in the most glowing terms.

It was a grazing and farming ranch, he stated, twenty miles from Cheyenne, of about a thousand acres, fitted up with good buildings, and stocked with a hundred head of cattle. Price four thousand dollars-five hundred down, and balance on as much time as the purchaser might desire.

Well pleased with the glowing description, Ned at once closed a bargain with the agent, got the proper papers made out, and after pav-ing five hundred dollars down, bought him a rifle, revolvers, ammunition and other things he knew he would probably want, and set out for Cheyenne.

On his arrival there, he began to realize that he was really "out West," and in a part of it, too, where the average citizen had just as lief

shoot a man as to look at him.

Cheyenne, although somewhat of a city, was the roughest place the New England boy had ever seen, being filled with hunters, trappers, rancheros, gamblers, and all sorts of border ruffians. Law they pretended to have in the town, but little of it leaked out around, as near

as Ned could judge.

He remained a couple of days in the place, engaged in making various necessary purchases, in the way of a pair of oxen, an Indian mustang, and some utensils, and in course of dealing, mentioned that he had recently purchased the Ridley Ranch, and was going to take posses-

An old weather-beaten scout who was standing by at the time, gave vent to a grim laugh.

"Hev ye ever bin down thar, younker?" he demanded, surveying Ned from top to toe.

"Not yet," Ned replied; "guess I shall get started to-morrow."

"Well, lad, you've got grit beyond your

years, that's sartin," the scout said.
"Why so?" Ned asked, suspecting there was something behind the veteran's inquisitiveness.

"Beca'se, lad, thar ain't a dozen men hyar in Shian as could be hired to stay over night in thet aire Ridley Ranch, or my name ain't Old Mose Magoon. Why, boyee, don't ye know that the place is haunted?"
"Haunted be hanged!" Ned laughed. "1

never saw a bigger spook than myself yet."
"You'll see one ef ye tackle the Haunted
Ranch, tho'," Old Mose averred. "Thar's bin
nigh a dozen older 'uns than you as has tackled
the place; but they war either found wi' their heads cut off, or they cl'ared out arter the fust

night."
"Well, I'll try my luck," declared Ned. "I baven't the least fear of ghosts, and had as lief wrestle with a half a dozen of 'em as not."

But in view of emergency, he was careful to buy some more ammunition and a couple more rifles and revolvers, as well as an additional supply of provisions.

Haunted Ranch appeared to have a genera

bad repute in Cheyenne—nearly every one seemed to know of it, and have no desire to go

From what Ned could learn, an old rufflan named Ridley had in former years occupied the ranch, and had murdered his own daughter and then himself, since when the ghost of the daughter, Rena Ridley, had never ceased haunting the house and the surrounding country.

Whenever the subject was broached, Ned poohed! in derision; but in his own private opinion he was not so confident.

Although he did not believe in things supernatural, he was not sure what sort of an impression on him a ghostly encounter would

That same day, while he was sauntering through the principal street, a rough, blear

eyed and whisky-scorched individual approached him, beckoning him to pause.

"Well, what do you want?" Ned demanded,

coming to a halt.

"Be you the young feller what's goin' ter move over ter Haunted Ranch?" the man asked, in a business-like way, and his face glowed with the spirit of true frontier enterprise.
"I reckon I'm the feller," Ned responded.
"What of it?"

"Well, you see," the man went on, "I hate to see a young life like yourn thrown recklessly away; but, since you have resolved to tempt fate, I would respectfully inform you that I am the only reliable undertaker in the city; and to save time, I would suggest that it would be a good plan for you to purchase a coffin and take it along with you, thereby saving you the trouble of coming a matter of twenty miles to select one after your demise."

"Well, I'm shot if you haven't got the cheek of a fried lobster," Ned exclaimed, surprised. "When I come to need a funeral outfit it will

be time enough for you to talk."

"But, my friend, you will certainly need one in a few days; at least, I've already had the job of planting some forty odd cadavers over at the Haunted Ranch, and there's no reason to suppose that you'll be any luckier than those who tried their hand before you."

But Ned declared his intention of running all risks, and the next morning he started, with his outfit, for the Haunted Ranch.

"Waal, good-by, Wild Ned," the scout, Old Mose, said, shaking hands with the young adventurer. "Ef ye will go, I kan't help et. I'll drap around in a couple o' days and give you a dump inter some handy buffler wallow, an' stick up a board ter let folks know you've gone!"

"All right! Be sure and bury me with my boots on!" Ned retorted, as he rode off toward

the north.

There was a wagon-trail all the way to the ranch, so that he had no fear of losing his way but, owing to the slow gait of the oxen, he could not make last progress, and it was quite dark when he saw the buildings of his new home looming up before him.

As may be imagined, a feeling of loneliness crept over him as he approached the reputed abiding-place of ghosts, for it could not be otherwise, no matter if he had been a thousand

times braver than he was.

At Cheyenne he had been told that the nearest human resided at the Forks, five miles beyond the ranch; therefore he was alone in the midst of whatever perils environed him.

Summoning all his courage, Ned drove boldly

up to the house and dismounted.

It was a singular place, the house being a large two-story and garret frame building with many queer angles and windows; the paint was entirely worn off from it, showing that it had been abandoned to neglect

Two oak trees grew just in front of it.

Not far from the house were the barns and outbuildings, and to these Ned first of all conducted his pony and oxen, securing the former in a large corral, and the latter in the main barn.

As he entered the dark, gloomy barn, he

glanced sharply around, nerved to see any startling sight that might present itself.

And behold! Such a sight was before him! Looming up in the darkness was a spectacle that was calculated to give any person a start. Swinging in mid-air, and by his neck, which

was noosed in a lariat fastened to the scaffolding

overhead, was a dead man.

His body was wrapped in a white sheet, to the chin, giving him even a more ghastly ap-pearance than would have otherwise been the

Ned gave vent to a startled cry at the sight, but did not retreat, as many a boy would have

Then his gaze became riveted upon another sight which literally froze him to the spot for the moment.

Just beyond the suspended corpse, in the fun ther end of the barn, shone two fiery spots in the dense darkness, which he knew were eyes

But whether they belonged to a human being or not he could not tell-he knew, at least, that they were glaring straight at him.

A chill of horror crept down his spine; he

knew not what to do.

If an enemy was crouching there in the darkness, any movement on his part might bring forth a bullet that would drop him.
"I don't believe it is any one," he mused.

after standing several moments in doubt. "I'll

test the matter, at any rate."
He allowed his hand to drop cautiously toward his belt until it reached the butt of his self-cocking six-shooter; the next instant he drew the weapon and fired.

Following the report of the shot there was a wild yowl, and a huge cat darted past Ned out

of the barn.

One ghost the less," Ned muttered, with re-"It's some satisfaction at least."

He then proceeded further into the barn to see if any fodder was to be found for his stock.

As he passed under the suspended corpse, out flew one of the cadaver's feet and gave the adventurer a kick beside the head.

With a shiver, Ned bounded away to a safe distance, now more startled than before.

"See here, old man," he cried, rubbing his head, "you're too fresh. Just suppose you come down to terra firma, if you want to kick me,"

But the suspended delegate did not reply. To

all appearance he was as dead as ever.

Ned did not know what to do or think. the thing alive? Or was it dead, and the kick caused by some mechanical arrangement?

He was inclined to the latter supposition, and

again resolved to put the matter to test.

Taking aim, he fired at one of the suspended

man's legs. But, though the body swayed a trifle, proving that the bullet had hit its mark, there was no sound indicating life.

"Well, you've got lots of nerve to stand that without wincing," Ned muttered.

Cautiously approaching the body, he discovered how the clever kick was worked. Several planks in the floor were loose, and footsteps caused them to spring downward, thereby tightening a cord which ran up over one of the scaffold-poles and thence downward to the bodythus, when the cord was tightened, the string was so arranged that the leg of the defunct man

was forced to kick.

It was a clever scarecrow, and Ned knew from the moment of his discovery that there was more human agency in the ghost business in and around Ridley Ranch than there was supernatural, and decided that the ghostly appearances were but a ruse to hide some nefarious and secret business.

## CHAPTER VIII. THE GARRET GHOST.

AFTER caring for his oxen and horse, Ned found his way through the gathering darkness toward the house, wondering what more experiences he was to encounter. Grim and gloomy floomed up the mansion; the prairie breeze sighed mournfully through the branches of the oak, and the lonely bark of a wolf came faintly in on the breeze from the westward.

"I'll bet my life I'll soon make it sick for the ghosts around this roost!" Ned muttered. "I've already laid out two, and am able to tackle an-

other on sight."

But when he got around to the front of the lone residence, his enforced pluck began to desert him, for the place had anything but an inviting appearance

Before attempting to enter. Ned took a seat upon the horseblock, outside the door-vard, and made a long and questioning survey of the

place, his face s ber, and his eyes watchful.
"Edward Harris, is there such a thing as ghosts, or not?" he mused. "For if there is, you want an introduction, that's all. This place certainly looks like a spook nursery."

Suddenly he uttered a startled cry, as his gaze became riveted upon an upper window of the mansion, from which shone a bright light.

As this window was a good many feet above him, Ned was unable to look into the room, but he presumed the light emanated from a lamp, lantern or candle.

"Now, then, look out for a thoroughbred spook!" he muttered. "I've always heard say they were fond of peering down attic windows

and so forth. Ha!

He was not wrong in his surmise. Before the window now stood a tall, spectral figure, clad from top to toe in a winding sheet of white, and around it clung a peculiar, bluish-yellow halo of light.

One arm was outstretched, and pointed directly down at Ned, as he sat upon the block.

"Humph! that's a perlite invitation fer me to puckachee, as they say over in Cheyenne," he thought. "Now that ghost knows its biz, that's evident, but I ain't quite scared into taking leg-bail, yet."

A few seconds the "ghost" stood before the w ndow; then it gradually disappeared from

The next moment, however, a fleshless skeleton came dancing before the window, gesticulating wildly, and nodding its grinning skull at the young adventurer on the outside.

At the same time, a series of horrible groans, piercing shrieks, and loud, unearthly voices same from within the house, and caused Ned's hair literally to stand on end; but he shut his teeth together hard, and his eyes flashed their defiance

"That's a pretty rough dose to fling at a fellow, all in one chunk, but I reckon Richard is still himself," he muttered, grimly. "Ah! the bony biped has vamosed! I wonder what next?"

Nothing, evidently, for after a half hour's wait, Ned saw nothing more of the spectral

visitants.

But, he had seen enough to satisfy him that he would rather sleep on the open prairie, than in the mansion, until he should have an opportunity to thoroughly inspect the place by day-

So he wandered out to a safe distance from the house, and spent the night there, the grassy earth his bed, and the starry heavens above his

In the morning he arose and returned to the vicinity of the mansion, where he breakfasted upon some of the edibles he had brought from Chevenne.

After breakfast, he looked well to his weapons, and entered the dwelling on a tour of inspection, resolved, if possible, to ferret out

the mystery of the previous night. To his surprise, he found that several of the rooms were still furnished, in part, probably as they had been left at the time of the Ridley traged v.

Everything was dust-covered and moth-eaten. however, and a general state of neglect was everywhere visible. In one room a large blood-stain upon the uncarpeted floor showed where old Ridley had either killed his daughter or himself.

Room after room Ned visited, and closely examined everything, even to the attic chamber where he had seen the specter; but nowhere could he find anything of the ghost, or of the skeleton-which nowise satisfied him, for he had expected to find some evidence of human agency in the matter of the ghost business.
"Well, I guess I shall have to give it up for

the present!" he concluded, when all his search resulted in no discovery. "But if I see that phantom again, I'll know what it is made of.

or my name ain't Ned Harris."

That day he spent in getting settled. He moved into one of the ground-floor rooms and fixed things up to his own liking; then, mounting his pony, he made a circuit of the surrounding prairie, in search of the stock he had bought with the ranch. About a mile from the ranch, in a grassy arroyo, he found a herd of perhaps a dozen head, grazing, but they stampeded wildly toward the west at Ned's If there ever had been more of approach. them, they evidently had been killed off, and what remained were in almost a wild state.

Remembering that the Forks lay but five miles beyond the ranch, Ned concluded to ride over to the settlement, and see what sort of humans were his nearest neighbors.

On reaching the place, he found it contained but a dozen cabins, two of which were saloons, and the third a supply store.

About a dozen men were lounging before the saloons; and they were typical border ruffiaus, every one of them-rough in dress, armed to the teeth, blear-eyed, and brutal in expression

of countenance

They scanned Ned closely as he rode into the Forks, as if his coming was unwelcome, and, when he dismounted and entered one of the

saloons, they followed him.

"Well, yonker, I s'pose you're the gallus galoot w'at's squatted down at the Ridlev's?" one of the lot remarked, a burly, ill-appearing fellow, who looked capable of annihilating any ordinary person, and he emphasized his words by slapping Ned heavily upon the shoulder.
"Well, yes, I should remark that

yes, I should remark that it was!" Ned replied, stepping aside and dealing the fellow a left-hander full in the breast that sent him half-way across the room. "Come up and have a cigar!"

The rough picked himself up from off a row of barrels over which he had fallen and looked the youth over from head to foot, in evidently

great astonishment.

"Waal, I don't keer of we do, stranger," he observed, frowning at the grins of his companions; "but let me lisp in yer ear, pard, that ye'd better start in more gentle hyarabouts, ef ye don't wanter git teetotally cleaned out."
"Just what I was about to observe to you,"
Ned retorted; "I've got a disease in my arms

which strikes out when I least expect it.

"Then ye mean to say that you're sum on yer muscle, eh?"

"Well, I presume the boy's able to take care of himself," answered the boy, promptly.

The roughs, with one accord, seemed impressed with this idea, and if, as Ned imagined, they had entered the saloon to pick a quarrel with him, they evidently concluded it was not best, for no hostile action was offered, although they eyed him narrowly and tigerisbly.

"Seen any ghosts over at the ranch?" the rough asked, whom his companion called Black

"Oh, yes; I had an interview with a few of 'em last night," Ned asserted. "I'm thinking of going halves with 'em, and getting up a ghost exhibition before long."

The men exchanged glances, and something like a grim smile came over their passion-marked

"Waal, I wish you much joy—that's all," Black Bill growled. "Better you than me a-cavortin' around with thet 'ar speerit o' Rena Ridley."

Ned laughed lightly and soon after took his

departure.

1 I'll bet a pair of boots some of that crowd is connected with the ghost business," he mused, as he rode back toward the ranch. "I'll probe

the matter to night, sure!"

Arrived at the ranch, he once more went over the house, but failed to make any discoveries. He then proceeded to the barn and cut down the body of the lynched man and buried it in the yard corner

He then waited for night to approach.

And it drew rapidly on, heralded by a heavy

thunder and rain-storm.

Armed with his rifle and revolvers, Ned stole silently from the house, as soon as it was quite dark, and although the rain had now set in, he climbed into the top-most branches of one of the oaks, which brought him to a level with, and only a few feet from the attic window, where the specter had shown itself the previous

night.
"Now, then, my slippery shadow, just show

inspect you," he said to himself.

It certainly was a gloomy position he occupied, but he was resolved to solve the mystery of the apparitions at any cost to him-

The thunder boomed responsively to every lightning flash, and the rain soaked his garments through to the skin; but with unflinching grit the young ranch-owner maintained his vigil.

And he was not destined to be disappointed, for at length a light was seen in the attic

Whether of a candle or a lamp, he could not tell, as it was out of range of the window-

probably in one corner of the room.

Almost immediately after the light appeared, came the groans and shrieks such as Ned had heard the night previous. Then the grinning skeleton popped into view, and began to rattle and shake its bones, and execute a grotesque dance. Around it clung the strange halo that had been around the robed specter the previous night.

It was a spectacle fearful enough in appearance to try almost any man's nerves, and it was little wonder that Ned shuddered.

But it was a habit with him to use reason at all times, and he now reasoned that it could not be otherwise than that the skeleton was strung upon wires, and was thus worked by living hands.

So he remained silently in the tree, his rifle

ready for use.

Some five minutes of the grotesque gesticulations followed; then the skeleton as suddenly disappeared from view, as it had come.

After about five minutes more had elapsed the spectral white-robed figure approached the window, and there was a wild, unearthly

"Oh! but I'll make you laugh on the other side of your mouth," Ned muttered, and level-

ing his rifle at the specter, fired.

There came a flerce yell of agony, that penetrated out into the night with startling distinctness; then the ghost threw up its arms and fell to the floor

Quickly Ned slipped down from the tree, and entered the mansion; then he lit his lantern, and grasping it in one hand, and a cocked

revolver in the other, he ran up-stairs.

There upon the floor lay the ghost, silent and motionless, and pulling away the sheet, Ned was somewhat astonished to find no less a personage than Black Bill, of the Forks-now either dead or insensible from a bullet wound in his breast.

## CHAPTER IX.

A DUEL BY MOONLIGHT.

IT was a discovery that effectually "laid" the ghost of Ridley's Ranch, and Ned could hardly refrain from giving a shout of exultation over his victory.

Examination proved that Black Bill was not dead, nor, in all probability, dangerously wounded, and so while he was in an inactive state Ned bound him hand and foot, and dragged him down the stairs into his own part of the domicile.

Sitting the ruffian up in the arm-chair the place afforded, Ned applied restoratives, and soon had the spook-player restored to conscious-

ness of his mishap, and his situation.
"Well, Black William, how's the state of your pulse since you have got your ghostly wings clipped?" the boy demanded, laughingly. "How are you going to soar about any more?" "The devil take you!" Black Bill growled.

" How'd ye do it?" "Alas, William, I cannot tell a lie," Ned replied, gravely, "I did it with my little penetrator," nodding toward his rifle.

The "laid" ghost swore again.

"Am I dangerousy wounded?" he asked, feel-

ing of his side.
"Oh, no; just winged, that's all. After you get a little rested I'm going to take you over to Cheyenne."

"Cuss ye, no; never thar!"
"Oh, yes I will. I have a sort of notion it may interest the authorities to know what your object is in playing up ghost."

And although the ruffian uttered all kinds of

protests, Ned was firm in his purpose.

He had made up his mind that it would be the means of unearthing some scheme of evil were he to give Black Bill to the proper authori-

Therefore, about midnight, he bound the ruffian upon the back of the pony and then mounted himself, and started for Cheyenne.

He had not gotten three miles from the ranch when he heard the clatter of horses' feet in his rear, and rightly guessed that some of Black

Bill's comrades were giving chase. Setting spurs into the mustang, Ned gave it the rein, and away they dashed over the prairie at a fierce run, Black Bill, as a matter of course, getting fearfully stirred up by the leaps of the pony.

But Ned did not stop to consider this. was resolved not to give up his captive without

a struggle for it.

For about a mile perhaps the mustang flew on at a terrible rate of speed, leaving the pursuers behind; but after that, owing to the double weight it carried, its speed lessened, and Ned knew the enemy would soon gain on him again unless he resorted to some dodge to elude them.

Therefore he pulled out of the main trail to-ward the west about half a mile, and then

shaped his course toward Cheyeune.

As soon as it became daylight he made a survey of the wide expanse of prairie with his field-glass, but could discover nothing of the enemy, so he once more rode over to the main

About the middle of the forenoon, he rode leisurely into Cheyenne, and, as may be supposed, was the observed of all observers.

Halting in front of the lock-up, he was quickly surrounded by a big crowd of curious ones,

among whom was Old Mose.
"Hurra! the durned leetle skunk ain't dead yet," the scout shouted. "I say, Wild Ned, who've you got thar?"

"Only a ghost!" Ned answered, with a grin.

"Don't be frightened, gentlemen—this is Black William, the ghost of Ridley's Ranch, whom I bagged last night."

Great was the excitement at the announcement, and Black Bill had to be taken hurriedly into the jail, to save his neck from a lynch-mob.

On the day thereafter, Black Bill was granted a hearing, and, on being assured that he would get his freedom if he turned State's evidence, he made a confession. He revealed that he was a member of a famous band of desperadoes and counterfeiters, under the captaincy of one Kentucky Jim, who had long committed depredations along the border undetected, and who also had adopted the business of counterfeiting money, with head-quarters in a secret room in Ridley's Ranch.

The other members of the band were citizens of the Forks; the ghost business had been originated and designed for the purpose of keeping

folks away from the rendezvous.

When this revelation became known, Ned Harris was regarded as a veritable hero, and a party of rough and ready citizens was organized to go down to clean out the balance of the gang, Ned being elected, by unanimous vote, to take charge of the attack.

So he accepted, and a swoop was made down upon the Forks, that night, under cover of

darkness, but without success.

Forewarned, no doubt, by the capture of Black Bill, the gang had pulled up stakes, and

fled to other parts.

Satisfied by this time that he did not care to farm it, Ned, a few days later, sold the ranch at an advance, for it was now in good demand, since the ghost mystery was cleared up, and made his head-quarters in the then wickedest city in the West, Cheyenne. Feeling lonely, he sent for Anita, whose whereabouts he had ascer-tained, and the two went to housekeeping, a good share of Ned's time being spent in scouting and hunting, in company with the favorite scout, Frank Waddell (Wild Frank)—a surer shot and better trailer than whom did not then and does not, now, exist on the frontier.

If any scouting was necessary, or train-guiding to be done, it was generally intrusted to Ned and Frank, for the latter's wide ixperience and knowledge of the western country, and Ned's pluck and ready wit in getting out of

trouble or danger, worked well together.

It was not long after his taking up headquarters in Cheyenne, that Ned became cognizant of the fact that he was destined henceforth,

to become a hunted man.

One night, as he was sitting in a store, at Cheyenne, a person entered, and clapped him

upon the shoulder.
"Edward Harris," he said, "at the instance of your uncle and guardian, Alexander Filmore, I arrest you for robbery and murder!"

"And at this same instant I give you the grand bounce!" Ned replied; and suddenly seizing the detective, he raised him from the floor by the strength of his powerful arms, and threw him through a window into the street.

It was a neat act for even a giant to do, much less the lithe and not fully grown youth; but Ned had by constant practice become very strong of limb, and also an expert shot with rifle or revolver.

After this unceremonious ejection, the agent of Alex Filmore did not return to the assault.

But this did not put Ned off his guard. He knew that the Filmores would use every effort to get rid of him so that they could obtain possess on of the Harris property, and he doubted not that if this agent failed in his mission others would come to take his place.

So, after thinking the matter over, he left the store, resolved to hunt up the fellow, and make an example of him, to start with.

He found him in front of the United States hotel, and walked up to him, promptly and fearlessly, his eyes flashing.
"See here, sir stranger!" he said, sternly

"vou're the chap I flung out the window, ain't

you?"

"Well. I suppose I am," the man replied. wiping the blood from several cuts upon his face. "My name is Jack Jerrold, and as an officer I have come here to arrest you, in the name of the law."

"You're a liar, out and out!" Ned cried. May You can't show a detective's papers, to save your life, and you were sent here to murder me. Own the truth and shame the devil, for once-ain't that so?"

The man did not answer, but his eyes gleamed furtively, and he endeavored to get his right

hand slowly toward his hip-pocket.

Ned anticipated him, however, and quickly

covered him with a cocked revolver.

"No you don't!" he said, significantly, "I'll give you all the fight you want, however. You've come here to earn a sum of money by killing me. Not to let you return, disappointed, you shall fight a duel with me, and we'll see who comes out the better man!"

"No. no! I will not do it!" Jerrold cried.

"You would kill me."

"You shall have an equal chance with me; you ought not to flunk, when you came here to kill me," Ned retorted. "Either yeu shall meet me in a fair duel, or I'll drop you where you stand."

Seeing the ugly light in the hunted youth's eves, the villainous tool of the Filmores no more dared hesitate, and accordingly, signified his readiness to decide matters en duello.

Dueling, in those days, was almost a daily occurrence in Cheyenne, as well as in most border towns, and was looked upon as no particular crime, from the fact that it was about the only way to settle personal differences.

It was, however, not tolerated upon the main street of the "wickedest" city, and therefore Ned and his enemy retired to the "Duelist's Drop," a vacant lot on the outskirts of the town, where nearly every duel was fought, and many a man met his death.

They went not alone, for a large crowd of roughs and citizen admirers of this sort of sport, followed, making bets on the way as to which of the two would be elected for the expense of a funeral.

"It was a moonlight night, and everything was favorable for the "affair of honor."

As Ned was the challenging party, Jerrold had the choice of weapons, and after some hesifation named revolvers, at thirty paces.
"Just as you will," Ned replied. "I can

tetch you at any distance you like, I reckon,

and thereby make an example for others to contemplate, before they make contracts to kill Ned Harris,"

"It isn't certain who is going to get killed, yet," Jerrold retorted, savagely. "Even if I do go under, I'll have the satisfaction of knowing that there are others after you, and surely

you'll get dropped sooner or later."
"I defy the lot of them, and they'll find
they're hunting after a hot subject, if they
come fooling around here. There's plenty of cemetery room about Chevenne, for them that want to replenish their coffers by killing me at the instigation of a hoary-headed old villain."

The thirty paces were counted off, and the two men—for in size Ned was pretty nearly equal to a man—took their positions, facing

each other.

Old Mose, who had been selected as "boss" of the "picnic," called order, warned the opponents to beware of trickery, and then counted: "One! two! three !"

At the word three, both revolvers cracked.

almost simultaneously.

Jerrold fell to the ground, with a groan-not killed, but badly wounded.

His bullet whistled harmlessly by Ned's head. but "dropped" a Chinaman, whose demise

elicited a laugh from the boisterous crowd. Jerrold did not die from the effects of Ned's shot, but recovered, and was, later, hung by a party of regulators, for horse-stealing-for far greater a crime is it considered by the average far Westerner to steal a horse than to shoot a man

## CHAPTER X. A NEW VENTURE.

On the week following the duel Wild Frank and Ned took a wagon train into Northern Dakota, with supplies for a new settlement.

One night while they were camped in midprairie, about fifty miles from their destination. a man rode into camp, who had the appearance of a ranchero. He had the air of a gentleman. and looked as though he were in trouble. After introducing himself as John Marvin, a new settler in the then, as now, comparative wilderness, he stated that on the previous night a band of Indians had attacked and burned his house and outbuildings, killed his wife and carried off his daughter, a young girl of sixteen, while he was away from home on a hunt.

Wild Frank and Ned listened attentively, the former's eyes gleaming fiercely; for, despite the fact that Indian blood coursed in his veins, Waddell was one of the bitterest Indian baters and hunters on the frontier from the Rio Grande to the British line.

"I'll guarantee it's the work of that infernal skunk, Black Spider, one of Sitting Bull's under chiefs," he said. "He's been on the war-path. along with a lot of half-breeds and mixed reds, for some time now, and I reckon it's more'n probable they'll not git broke up till Uncle Sam

takes a hand in the game." "But my child-is there no hope of rescuing her from these red cut-throats?" Mr. Marvin asked, anxiously.

"Oh, yes; we can fix that all right," Frank replied. "I know where the gang o' Spider

hangs out, and I'll send Ned, here, to spy around

till I return from the settlement."

This suited Ned, for he had never had an adventure with the reds, and it also pleased Marvin, who had a father's anxiety to regain possession of his lost daughter.

After preparations had been made, Ned and the farmer mounted their horses, equipped and

ready for their journey.

"Now, then, you want to ride south-west about fifteen miles, till ye strike the Chevenne river," Wild Frank said, "and if you follow a direct line with your compass from here, I reckon you'll come out above the island in the center of the stream, where Black Spider holds out. Here you want to lie low and keep a watch on the island until I join you and map out a plan for rescuing the girl."

So the two Indian-hunters rode away, leaving Wild Frank to continue on to the settlement in

charge of the wagon train.

Before daylight Ned and the ranchero came to the conclusion that they must have ridden easily fifteen miles; so they drew rein, to reconnoiter. Leaving their horses in a prairie arroyo, they struck out on foot in the direction they calculated would bring them to the Cheyenne. An hour's silent and cautious walk brought them into a belt of cottonwoods which fringed the stream.

The Cheyenne, at this point, was quite wide and deep, and just in the center of the stream, opposite where Ned and Marvin struck it, was wooded island of considerable size, the thicket of timber extending to the very edge of

the water.

"That's the place," Ned whispered, as they stood among the cottonwoods and gazed toward the island. "All seems as quiet as a mice now, but you'll see plenty of hornets when the nest gets astir. The first and best thing for us to do is to get as far from the island as we can, without losing sight of it. If the reds were to discover us around here, it will be rather warm for us, I reckon."

Accordingly, they moved up the river, and found a sort of open glade surrounded by a dense thicket upon the shore, and took cover

there to await developments.

At early dawn Ned crept forth to the edge of the river, to keep up a watch on the island and their surroundings, while Marvin slept during the forenoon; then he was to take his turn at repose during the afternoon, and both were to

be on guard at night.

As prophesied, the Indians began to show themselves at daylight-some getting water and others fishing, for the Cheyenne affords as good fish as any other stream in the North-west.

But as none of the reds offered to cross to the main-land, Ned had no fears for their present safety.

The day passed without incident, and night once more drew on, dark and threatening.

Ned arose about six o'clock from an afternoon pap, and crept out to the water's edge, where Marvin was lying, concealed behind a fallen tree, on guard.
"Well, any news?" Ned queried.
"Yes," the ranchero replied. "I was about to

come and rouse you. Something like an hour ago an Indian girl pulled out from the isl

and up the stream. She was the best-looking Injun I ever saw. Shortly afterward another She was the best-looking canoe pulled out, containing a buck Injun, and followed swiftly after the first."

"Humph! mebbe two lovers going to some

favorite trysting place," Ned commented.
"No, I don't think so," Marvin answered. "The buck red-skin looked as black and ugly as a thundercloud, and was painted up hideously.

I reckoned he was pursuing the squaw."
"Possibly," Ned said, reflectively. "It is also possible this pair are out spying. I think I'll take a careful stroll up-stream, and see what

I can learn."

"Well, do as you think best, but don't stay If you get into trouble, fire a shot and long. let me know."

Promising to return within a couple of hours, Ned seized his rifle and set forth up the river shore.

Although by no means an experienced trailer. Ned had already picked up a knowledge of woodcraft, which enabled him to form pretty good opinions of his own, on matters pertaining to a life on the plains.

He had learned one point—that a scout could not be too cautious, in the Indian country, for the red-man is a more wily rascal than many of his white brothers when you put him in his

own element.

Therefore the young scout stole along the bank of the silent moving Cheyenne, exercising all possible caution and using his sharp gaze to penetrate the early gloaming of the approaching

Only the cry of a tree-toad, the peculiar chirp of peepers, and the occasional gurgling of the waters against the shores, broke the stillness of

nature's approaching repose.

Fortunate for Ned that he was cautious and watchful, for he had not gone over a mile ere he came to a lower bottom land, and nearly debouched into a sudden clearing, wherein, near the water's-edge stood two personsevidently the two Indians Marvin had spoken

Taking to his hands and knees, Ned crept along until he was somewhat nearer to them; then he perceived to his astonishment that the Indian girl was securely bound to a small sapling that grew in the clearing.

Not far from them, was a large pile of logs, at the water's-edge. They had been cut no doubt by the Indians, and would eventually be floated down to the island, for building pur-

In front of the girl the Indian stood, with a tomahawk clinched in his right hand.

Judging by the ugly expression upon his hideously painted face, he was in an angry mood, and contemplated annihilating the young squaw on the spot.

"Speak!" he cried, savagely. "War Horse waits. Let Light Foot give her answer quickly, or War Horse will bury his tomahawk in her

brain!"

"Light Foot has nothing to answer, more than what she has already answered," the girl replied, bravely. "War Horse is a coward to attack the daughter of his superior chief, Black Spider, and his scalp shall pay for it."

"War Horse fears not Black Spider, nor all

His heart is set on bringing Light his braves.

Foot to his lodge, or taking her life!

"Let War Horse do his worst, then, for Light Foot defies him!" the girl cried, with more spirit, Ned thought, than he would have felt like exhibiting, under similar circumstances. In after years, however, he went through like ordeals, with even more nerve.

The red-skin lover uttered a fierce cry at the girl's defiance, and raised his hand to strike her with the tomahawk. But before he could do so, a rifle cracked, and an unerring bullet shattered the wrist of the hand that grasped the tomahawk, and the weapon fell to the ground.

With an unearthly yell, and not to be balked in his revengeful purpose, War Horse at once stooped and seized the hatchet again, with the intention of finishing the work he had sworn to

accomplish.

But before he could rise from his stooping position, Ned's rifle cracked again, and War Horse fell upon his face, never to prance in battle again.

Leaving cover, Ned ran down to where Light Foot was bound, and cut the thongs that con-

fined her to the sapling.

"There you are, Miss Injun," he said, in his vial way. "I'll bet ye ain't sorry about it, neither."

"Light Foot is very thankful to pale-face," the girl replied, gratefully. "Although not afraid to die, she would much prefer to live.

"Blamed fool if you wouldn't," Ned retorted. "S'pose you're old Black Spider's gal, eh?"
"I am." She spoke in good English. "What
does the pale-face do in the land of the red-

man?"

"Oh, I'm sojourning hereabouts because it's healthy," answered Ned. "So just tell Black Spider that when I drop down this way again—after I visit the settlement—I'll pay a visit at the island, and offer him a hundred horses for his daughter."
"Light Foot is not to be purchased with

horses!" the girl replied, haughtily, "and while she is grateful toward her rescuer, he had better keep away from the camp, for Black Spider likes not the pale-faces."

Then she turned, entered her canoe, and

pulled down the stream, the gathering gloom soon hiding her from view.

"I wonder if I've made an impression?" Ned muttered, with a smile. "I've a notion to pay a sly visit to that island, anyhow."

His eyes fell upon the pile of logs, and an idea entered his mind. But as it began to rain just then, he concluded first to return and see Marvin, which he did.

It was a tremendous rain. At first, for nearly an hour it poured down in torrents—then it settled down into a steady rainfall which bade

fair to continue all night.

At midnight it had not ceased or moderated, and the two men on the river bank saw that the waters were rapidly rising.

"Now is a good chance to visit the island, and I'm going to do it," Ned declared.

"You?" Marvin exclaimed. "You'd better

wait 'til your partner comes."
"Not much! I'm going alone. Listen, and I'll tell you my idea, and I'll venture you'll say

it's a good one. I'll bet I'll get your gal out of limbo, in short order."

CHAPTER XI.

A NIGHT AMONG REDS. "This is what I'm going to do," Ned explained. "Up where I rescued an Injungal, is planied. Of where I rescut an injury as a pile of logs upon the shore, that have been gathered there by the Indians, for rafting purposes. Now, the water being high if logs are seen floating down stream by the red-skins, I reckon they won't suspect anything more than that the water is carrying off their logs, and, as a natural consequence, they'll man a boat and pull for the skidway, to save what logs they can. In the mean time, I'll be floating down the river, at the end of a log, and make the island in safety."

Marvin listened, his face wearing a doubtful expression. He saw that Ned had the nerve and grit to undertake 'most any venture; but he also knew that the Indian is not so easily

deceived.

"Well, you are at liberty to do as you please, I suppose, but I am afraid you will get yourselr into trouble," Marvin expostulated.

"It won't surprise me if I do. I was born to

get into trouble, but I've got the lives of a cat, and will get out of my scrapes somehow. As for the island, I've not much fear for peril. I'm goin' to send a few logs down before I go, to kind of quiet the reds, then I'll float down myself."

Looking well to his weapons and ammunition, Ned strapped his rifle to his back, and left for the glade, first advising Marvin to give him timely warning should he see any hostile move on the part of the Indians.

On arriving at the logpile, Ned found that it would be an easy matter to roll the logs into the stream, for the water was already beginning to surround the pile, and cover the bottom lands.

So he gave one of the smallest of the timbers a roll, and away it went, down-stream, at the will of the now swift and turbulent current.

He rolled in half a dozen in rapid succession. Then, selecting one of the largest in the pite, he rolled that in also, and sprung in after it.

The large end was hollow, and large enough

to hide the body of a man.
Into this, feet first, Ned crawled, and allowed himself to be carried swiftly toward the island, against which the rising waters dashed. His novel vessel headed directly toward the island; but when he drew nearer to it, Ned perceived that a number of savages were gathered upon the beach, near where the log would probably

strike the shore. There was no help for it. Ned had no power of guiding his clumsy craft, the hollow end, under which he was ensconced, aimed directly for the shore, the heavy end dragging behind

under water.

The Indians were evidently preparing to

launch a canoe

Hopeful was Ned that they would pay no attention to his log, for he was in a decidedly unfortunate position, to defend himself.

Nearer and nearer the log approached the shore; the thunder grumbling a threatening accompaniment along the horizon to the waters'

Crash! Ashore went the log, swinging around and crushing against the undergrowth that lined the beach, with a jar that nearly knocked

Ned's breath out of him. He scarcely breathed. Was be discovered? No! For in a few moments Ned had the satisfaction of hearing the Indians embark in the canoe, and pull up the

stream, with guttural cries.

After their departure, Ned remained within his covert still another five minutes, until he judged that the vicinity was deserted—then he cautiously thrust his head above the log, and peered around.

Seeing no signs of human presence, he drew himself out of the water, and proceeded first of all to squeeze the water out of his garments.

He then unslung his rifle, and stole stealthily into the thicker part of the chaparral forest that

covered the island.

Not ten rods had he advanced, when, suddenly, there stepped out into his path, from behind

a tree, a savage of large stature.

For an instant the boy and the red-skin stood glaring at each other, neither speaking, or raising a weapon; then, quicker than flash, Ned dropped his rifle, and leaped upon the brave, his hands clutching the astonished Indian's throat in a vise-like gripe.

In response, the red-skin wrapped his powerful arms about Ned's waist, and then commenced an extraordinary duel. It was only a matter

of endurance who should first succumb.

Terrible was the strain about Ned's waist, and he was well aware he could not hold out long, under it, for not only was it exceedingly painful, but it was with greatest difficulty he could get his breath.

The red-skin, certainly, was in full as bad a fix, and it was evident his wind was thoroughly shut off by Ned's determined clinch about his windpipe, and it was therefore but a matter of a few moments when he too must give up the ghost.

No words were uttered and but a few moves

were made.

Nearly a minute stood they there, their faces distorted, and their eyes bulging from their

But, at last, just as young Harris felt sure he must expire, the Indian loosened his gripe; there was a rattle in his throat, a convulsive shudder, and then a fall to the ground. Ned clutched a tree for support, and it was several minutes ere

he could get his breath freely.

"By George! that red-skin was a bear for hugging!" he muttered, "but Yankee Doodle gets in his work, when it comes to choking. I

wonder what next?"

It was still raining—seemingly the windows of the heavens were open to let forth another

Believing that the now dead savage was a guard, and probably the only one between the Indian camp and the river, on that side of the island, Ned concluded that he could get nearer to the camp, without trouble, so he stole along. once more, stealthily, and soon came to the edge of a small clearing, in which were the skin lodges of Black Spider's village.

These lodges were formed in a circle, and within the encircled space a large fire was burning, a great skin blanket suspended above it to tree branches, being used to keep the rain from drowning out the fire.

Ned watched the scene be ore him with a searching gaze, forming his plans while he Only a few Indians were seen about the camp, and they only came out of their lodges, occasionally, to replenish the camp fire.

Nothing could he see of Marvin's daughter, however; she very likely was confined in one of the tents—which one he of course could not guess, but he naturally concluded that she would be found in Black Spider's own lodge.

After some deliberation, he formed a plan

which he believed would be successful.

Going back to the neighborhood of where he landed, he gave vent to a shrill Sioux war-whoop, which he had learned of Wild Frank then turning, he swiftly ran up the shore, with a view of reaching the opposite end of the island by the time the red-skins reached the spot where he had given the cry. Twice, in his flight, he nearly ran against an Indian guard, but by skillful dodging he evaded discovery

To his satisfaction, he soon heard the Indians rushing pell-mell toward the place whence had come the war-whoop, with guttural cries and

discordant yells,

"Now is my time to visit the camp," and with rapid steps the daring young scout once more approached the clearing

The openings in the lodges faced upon the circle, so that there was less danger of his being seen than though it had been otherwise.

Seeing no one in the circle on arriving at the edge of the clearing, he continued on, and a moment later he was in the rear of the largest lodge, which he doubted not belonged to the

chief, Black Spider.

Applying his ear to the skin, he listened eagerly, but the roar of the rain and river prevented him from hearing anything within the lodge. So drawing his keen-edged hunting-knife, he cautiously cut a slit in the skin and peered in, getting a full view of the interior.

The only occupant was a white girl, who partly reclined upon a pile of skins, bound

hand and foot.

Her face bore traces of tears and deep anxiety. To think, with Ned, was to act. Enlarging the aperture, he sprung into the lodge.

The girl naturally gave vent to a startled cry

at sight of him.

"'Sh! make no noise!" Ned warned, in a low "I have come to rescue you and take you to your father!"

Without further words he raised her in his strong arms and passed from the tent.

Half-way between it and the edge of the clearing he was suddenly halted, a lasso settling

about him and jerking him back to the ground. Ere he could rise or extricate himself a halfdozen burly red-skins were upon him and bound

him hand and foot.

He was then taken to the circle and bound to

a stake with strong lariats.

Soon after the main part of the band returned from the upper end of the island, and there was a consultation among the tribe. Ned could not understand what was said, but soon afterward he was taken from the post and bound on his

back upon a fallen tree.

He then perceived what was about to happen, for the red-skins pegan tearing down and removing the lodges toward the lower end or the island, and also the other paraphernalia of the camp. What did it mean?

Was the water rising so rapidly that they were afraid to remain on the island?

It would seem so, for inside of ten minutes Ned found himself the only occupant of the

clearing."

The rain came steadily down-the roar of the rising waters, as they surged against the island, increased. The camp-fire died down to a mass of embers, and an hour later Ned was by no means elated to discover that the waters were submerging the island and surrounding his place of captivity.

## CHAPTER XII.

### AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

It looked decidedly as if Ned was going to be

drowned out.

The log to which he was bound lay flat upon the ground, and it promised to take but a few minutes of time until the rapidly rising waters should creep not only over that, but also over the helpless prisoner bound thereon.

What was he to do?

He was so securely fastened with strong lariats that there could be little possibility of his freeing himself. He did not look for any aid to come from Marvin, because he could give no signal.

Louder and louder grew the roar of the waters, and higher and higher they arose around the young adventurer, until he felt his garments once more soaking with the cold

water.

In five minutes more all of his person was submerged, except his head, which by a force of determination not to give up until the last

he managed to keep above tide.

It was a desperate situation, however, as he well knew, and with the knowledge came the · unwelcome fact that it could be only a matter of a few minutes until he should have to succumb to his hot rible fate.

"Quick!" a voice suddenly cried, as, at the me instant, he felt his bonds cut. "Pale-face same instant, he felt his bonds cut. get into Light Foot's canoe, and she will take him to a place of safety."

With a glad cry Ned hastened to obey, and was soon seated in one end of the pretty Indian

girl's canoe, feeling like a new lad.

Without a word Light Foot seized her paddle and dextrously guided the birchen craft through between the trees, finally debouching into the rushing current of the river at the lower end of the island.

From here the canoe was dashed along at a fearful rate of speed, taxing the girl's efforts to

the utmost to keep it from swamping.

After some ten minutes of this sort of ride she drove the frail shell in toward the shore, and succeeded in making a small inlet and effecting a landing on the main shore.

Here she got out of the boat and motioned

for Ned to do likewise.
"Let the pale-face go and find his broth as, then return here, and he shall know the gratitude of the daughter of Black Spider, in the finding of the pale-face girl," she said, motioning for Ned to leave.

Glad to accommodate, Ned at once hastened to obey. He felt sure he had nothing to fear from the Indian girl, or she would not have rescued him from certain death on the island.

So he went back and hunted up Marvin, and the two hastened to the inlet, where, sure enough, they found Marvin's daughter, but not

Light Foot!
Three days later the trio reached the settlement. From there Ned and Wild Frank went

back to Cheyenne.

Soon after the termination of this adventure. Wild Frank journeyed into the northern part of Montana, where he always spends the winter at his Trapper's Rest, when not otherwise engaged in active service.

Left without his pard, Ned lingered about Cheyenne until the early autumn, when he took a trip into the mining regions of Idaho,

near Boise City.

Here he once more became aware that the Filmores still had their agents on his track

One day, while sitting in a hotel at Boise, a ragged youth came in, selling half-oranges, for, being large-sized fruit, the price must necessarily be so high, in that out-of-the way metropolis, as to be above the reach of the ordinary pilgrim. So the habit was to split the difference, in splitting the oranges in half.

"Orange, sir!" the youth said, laying a piece in Ned's hands, and then passing on to the next

person, to make a sale.

As the fruit looked really tempting, Ned got outside of it on short notice, and paid the vender his price on his return.

But he soon regretted doing so. Strange pains in his stomach and a wild dizzy feeling soon attacked him, and he realized that he was

very sick.

He had the presence of mind, however, to have the hotel-clerk send for a doctor, who came promptly -for in the mining districts a doctor is glad of a chance to get a job, most of the sickness in those parts being caused by rifle, knife, or revolver, and being hurriedly fatal.

"I have just eaten an orange," Ned explained, in answer to the doctor's inquiries,

"and I am fearful it was poisoned."

An emetic was promptly administered, and the stomach's contents soon came forth, and in a little while Ned felt all right again.

He was now satisfied that an agent of the Filmores had made the foul attempt on his life,

and he naturally felt revengeful.

That he should be hunted and haunted by the scoundrel who already had murdered his two test friends greatly imbittered him, and he re solved to strike in self-defense-make it a lifefor-a-life fight.

As soon as he felt fully recovered from the effects of the poison, he left the hotel, and made inquirles for the erange-vender, but no one ap-

peared to know of his whereabouts, or anything of him. He made a tour of the hotels and saloons, to investigate the registers; but on none of them could he find a name from the east. Only one eastern arrival had there been for several days, and that person was Mrs. Dr.

Cay, of Boston.

While reading the name, it at once struck
Ned that she might be his new foe. He also remembered that he had seen a notice in the local

paper which read:

"Wanted.—A young woman, who can be relied upon to mind her business, to assist. Call upon
"Mrs. Dr. Cay, at American House."

It occurred to Ned to answer the advertisement in person, for he was satisfied he could make up enough like a woman to disguise his real sex. He had as yet no beard, and his face was as smooth as a woman's. His hair, too, flowed down over his shoulders, making it unnecessary to wear a wig.

He at once went back to the hotel where he was stopping, and interviewing one of the do-mestics, succeeded in securing her Sunday-go-

to-meeting outfit for a few days.

Resorting to his room, he at once made a dive into the mysteries of a feminine wardrobe, and in half an hour was "made up" in an exceedingly flash style, with hat, dress, shawl and eye-

He was so changed in appearance that he had little fear his disguise would be penetrated. Accordingly he returned to the American, and at request was shown to Mrs. Dr. Cay's apart-

The Mrs. Doctor was a stout, elderly lady of the masculine order, with a hard visage, dark piercing eyes, and a perceptible fringe of mustache upon her upper lip.

She looked Ned over from head to foot as he

entered, with a critical glance.

"Well, who are you?" she demanded, in a surly way, motioning him to a chair. "Do you come in answer to my advertisement?"
"You bet!" replied Ned, characteristically.

The doctor looked pleased.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"Oh! I'm a notorious!" Ned replied. "I'm Crimson Cal-so called 'cause I carved Bill Mc-Pherson last year. Ef ye want my sarvices I'm

open fer hire."

"I think you will suit," Mrs. Cay said, promptly. "I have an enemy here. His name is Ned Harris. If you will see that he is disposed of-do it so cautiously as not to excite attention, as it is a very easy thing to do in such e place as this—I'll give you a hundred dollars in gold."
"Madam, I must respectfully decline," Ned cried, drawing a revolver. "You've caught on-

to the wrong mule this hitch."

"What do you mean?" the agent of the Fil-

mores gasped, shrinking back.

"I mean that I'm Ned Harris, and that you're a gonner, despite poisoned oranges," Ned cried.
"Get up and git, now, straight out of this
town, or I'll guarantee you'll never see daylight again this side of purgatory."

It is unnecessary to state that Mrs. Dr. Cay made no delay in getting out, and that was the

last Ned ever saw of her.

When he got back in Chevenne again winter

had once more settled over the land, and people and prairie pards, as a general thing, were in winter quarters.

During the month of December the manager of McDaniel's theater on several occasions tried to persuade Ned to give an exhibition of sharpshooting on the stage, for it was widely known that he had no equal as a crack shot in those parts, not excepting Wild Bill or Laramie Joe.

Finally along came a Montanian calling himself Wiry Walt, who claimed he was the king-bee of all fancy shots, and hearing of Ned, sent

him a challenge.

It was promptly accepted, for if there was one thing above another on which Ned prided himself, it was his prowess both as a pistol and

and rifle shot.

The affair was arranged to take place upon McDaniel's stage, immediately after the regular performance, on the night of the 25th of December-Christmas-and to make it interesting, a hundred dollars a side was wagered, and the one who accomplished the greatest number of difficult tricks in the finest manner was to have the sum.

When the night came the theater was packed to overflowing, many ladies and army officers being present, in addition to the regular rough audience. The dull dramatic and variety bill was hurried through in order to give the con-

testants a chance.

Wiry Walt appeared first, and executed a dozen very clever and a few difficult shots.

Next came Wild Ned, a great favorite in Cheyenne, and introduced every shot Wiry Walt had given, first, in a rapid, careless, but surpassing manner.

Then he proceeded to give some fancy shots with rifle and revolver of astonishing and almost incredible dexterity, such as had never been made in that part of the West.

Wild cheers went up as he finished and made

his bow preparatory to leaving the stage.

But he did not go off with as much grace as he expected, for a pistol was fired in the audience, and Ned dropped to the floor.

But quickly assuming a sitting posture, he raised his rifle and fired at the man who had done the deed, whom he had seen even as he

With a gasping cry the man fell back, dead. Ned's last act upon the stage that night had most surely made a hit.

## CHAPTER XIII.

IMPENDING FATE.

NED was not badly hurt, but he had stricken his would be assassin to the death.

Afterward a search was made of the stranger's clothing, and as a result, papers were found upon his person which proved him

to be an agent of the Filmores.

Ned was not arrested, as he had simply acted in self-defense, but rather was praised for his prompt act. But he was gradually becoming, stern and gloomy, even though but a boy. His peace of mind, was destroyed. The Filmores having a purpose to accomplish by his destruction were not the ones to give up until they succeeded in their hellish design. Ned therefore was haunted, and hunted. Unknown foes were liable to strike him down at any moment. No wonder, then, he grew by force of habit suspicious of every one, and watched every stranger covertly as if to read them through

About a month after the incident on Mc-Daniel's stage, Ned was fully recovered from his wound, so as to be able to be around. Soon after he met and became acquainted with a young Texan named Fred Foster, who was almost Ned's counterpart, in looks, size, and dress; indeed, they were so wonderfully alike that each was often taken for the other when A strong attachment sprung up between them, partly because of this resemblance, and partly because their temperaments and tastes assimilated; so Ned soon persuaded Foster to come and live with himself and Anita.

Foster being at heart a royally good fellow, it was not long ere he and Anita as well as Ned,

were on the best of terms.

But it was not long so to remain. morning, as Ned went up to Foster's room, to awaken him early-as they were to take a hunt together, that day-he found his counterpart white and still, in death-a knife plunged to the hilt in his breast!

For a moment Wild Ned was appalled, but quickly recovering his composure, he proceeded

to investigate the matter.

Their house stood on the extreme outskirts of the city, nearly a quarter of a mile from any

other habitation.

Examination proved that the person or persons who had murdered poor Foster had effected an entrance into the chamber by climbing ing upon a back lean-to roof, and then prying up a window.

The same route of egress had been used,

evidently, after the crime had been committed. Going down-stairs, Ned awoke Anita, and made her acquainted with the tragedy. They then left the shanty together, to make an in-

vestigation there.

A slight fall of snow had taken place late in the evening before, so that Ned knew that he could see any footprints that had been made since that time.

Sure enough, below the window were the tracks of a horse, showing that the assassin had

come and departed upon horseback.

From the shanty, the tracks ran to the northward, over the open country, proving that, unless he had purposely made a wide detour, the assassin had not entered the town.
"It is another blow at me, sis," young Harris said, grimly. "Foster was killed by one of

ris said, grimly. "Foster was killed by one of Alex Filmore's agents, who mistook him for me. And by Heaven, I'll avenge his death!"

He called in the nearest neighbors, left orders for the city undertaker to look after the remains of poor Foster; then disguising himself,

rode away on the trail.

His disguise was that of a Yankee peddler, and was admiringly gotten up, his attire, false hair and beard and pack of trinkets having been gotten up by him especially, for occasional bits of detective business.

His horse, (which afterward served him so famously in his road-agent escapades) was one of the easiest and fleetest travelers on the plains, find a far better trailer than many of the socalled scouts.

Taking the trail, from his shanty. Ned rode

off as rapidly as the snow would permit, in par-suit of Fred's murderer. Well armed and in good condition. Ned was firmly resolved never to give up the trail, until he found the coward-

ly assassin, and avenged poor Foster's death.

The first day's ride resulted in naught. When
night dropped down over the snow-covered prairie, no signs of his enemy could he find, except in the trail, which still stretched forth

over the treeless expanse.

Always on the alert, Ned had occasionally. during the day's ride, picked up some pieces of dry wood; so that now, after scraping off the snow from the ground for some distance, he soon had a cosey camp-fire burning, and made a good supper on the food which he had brought along.

Early the next morning he was off again on the trail, with unbroken determination; but the day passed into the shades of evening, ere he gained the top of a prairie billow and saw in an arroyo before him, a camp-fire brightly burn-

Without hesitation, he rode down into the camp, which boasted of half a dozen Indian lodges, and around the camp-fire he found a dozen stalwart braves.

They were Sioux Indians, and not in warpaint, being evidently a strolling band of trap-

They gathered around Ned, however, with gibbering exclamations of curiosity

The chief was an ugly-looking old delegate and surveyed Ned in his Yankee disguise, in evident displeasure.

"What pale-face want?" he demanded, ruffly. "What pale-face do alone in winter, on prairie?"

"Waal, ye see, I'm peddlin' Yankee notions!" Ned explained, "an' my name is Ebenezer Cute, an' I thort as how mebbe ye'd like ter give a feller a smell o' yer camp-fire, an' take lt out in trade."

And dismounting, he at once began to exhibit a part of his stock in trade, consisting of brass buttons, gaudy handkerchiefs, ear-rings

finger-rings and so-forth.

Of course he could not have struck the reds on a better chord, and a "swop" was at once inaugurated, by which Ned succeeded in disposing of the worst part of his stock in trade, for the privilege of remaining over night in the camp. Then he removed his saddle-bags, and seated himself before the fire, upon them; and although he toasted his venison, and kept a narrow watch about the camp at the same time, he could see nothing of his supposed enemy.

Not a bit was he put off his guard, however, for he was pretty well satisfied he would find his man in the camp, when he had a chance to

look for him.

After the evening was well advanced, the Indians sought their lodges, one by one, until Ned alone was left by the camp-fire, to make the best of the situation

Aware that he would be watched on the sly, during the fore part of the night, at least, he rolled himself in his blanket, and with his sad-dle-bags as a pillow, stretched himself out as if to sleep.

Being a good deal fatigued, he soon fell asleep, in spite of his determination to remain awake. and on awakening with a start, found himself

in the clutches of a number of savages.

It was no use to struggle, and he was soon bound, hand and foot, and tied to a tree, near by. Then he discovered that the reds were not alone in effecting his capture. Seated upon a stump, near at hand was a young white man, upon whose by-no-means-handsome face was an expression of diabolic triumph.

Ned gave vent to an exclamation of astonishment, at sight of him. It was Gus Porter, his former enemy of the Windham Academy.

Young Porter laughed evilly as he saw the look of surprise upon Ned's disguised face.
"Well, you're took back a little, eh, to see your rival here?" he chuckled.

"Maybe I am—again, maybe I am not," Ned retorted, coolly. "You were always a villain, and not at all surprised am I to see you a special agent for a pack of murderers."

Porter frowned, as he retorted viciously:

"Well, I'm villain enough to have revenge on you! You may be smart out here among the wild animals, but you're not sharp enough to cope with me. After discovering that I had silenced the wrong man, I naturally expected you would give chase, and in disguise, too;

you would give chase, and in disguise, eoc, therefore, I knew you when you came."
"Well, I am glad you did. How much do you get from old Filmore for killing me?"
"Oh! that's a private matter. Perhaps I don't get anything—then again, perhaps I do. Anyhow, I've got you, and you may bet high that I am going to have satisfaction on the old

"Which means that it is your intention to kill me," Ned remarked, his eyes flashing as Porter came forward and tore the disguise from

his face.

"Of course it is," the young ruffian replied, with a leer. "You ain't wanted out east any more, and to make sure you don't return there to trouble any one, I am going to check your baggage for Kingdom Come. In the morning you'll have the satisfaction of shaking hands with the Old Nick."

"Ten to one I'll ring in a deal on you first," Ned retorted, "and if I do get a rap at you, you can bet that I'll fix you so that you'll never take another job of murdering, you detestable

Although bound beyond possibility of getting free, a guard was stationed over the young prisoner for the remainder of the night.

As soon as day dawned, Porter again

approached.
"Your time is up," he announced, "and if you've any desire to pray, you'd better be at it. We are now going to go off a hundred paces, and then run a race to see who can reach you first and tear off your scalp!"

With this heartless declaration the murderer

strode away, followed by the Indians.

With a feeling akin to horror, Ned saw his
executioners begin to measure off the hundred

Oh! just for a moment to be free, with his trusty weapons at his command!

But he was not free; he was helpless-power-

He saw the savages and their white leader, reach the end of the hundred yards, he saw them form in line, abreast, and at a given signal, rush toward him with drawn knives.

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### A GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT.

Almost any man in the position that Ned Harris was, would have blanched at the doom which confronted him-but not so with him.

He set his teeth tightly together, and his eyes flashed fire as he saw young Porter and the savages leap forward. He was resolved that even though they triumphed over him, they should not get a whimper out of him, no matter what his pain.

But, suddenly, he recollected something! A happy thought it was indeed that gave him power, bound as he was.

During the early part of the winter, he had discovered himself possessed of two very wonderful gifts-both mesmeric and ventriloquial.

The latter power he had cultivated from time time so that he had attained a remarkable proficiency in the art, and could throw a change of voice into almost any object, at a considerable distance from him.

Could he not use this gift now, to his advantage? It was worthy of a trial, at least!

On came the savages, bounding swiftly toward him, headed by Gus Porter. All had knives drawn; every one seemed anxious to reach the post first, and tear off the captive's scalp.
"Halt!" he caused a deep bass voice to thun-

der just above the heads of the gang. "The voice of the Great Spirit sounds in your ears!

Dare not to touch the prisoner!"

The Indians did stop, and gazed around them, dismay and fear depicted in their looks. From directly over their heads seemed to come the commanding voice, and with the innate superstition of their race, they were transfiguredawed.

"Bah! what is the matter, you fools," Gus Porter cried, angered at the sudden halt.

"Come along and finish up the job."
"The Great Spirit has forbidden it!" the chief

replied.

"Ay! the Great Spirit has spoken to Yellow the same strange voice Plume!" plainly said the same strange voice again, "and warns the Sioux chief to turn free the pale-face brave, lest the wrath of the Great Spirit smite the warriors of Yellow Plume to the earth and scorch his lodge with

"It shall be as the Great Spirit wishes," Yellow Plume solemnly responded, and he waved

his hand toward his warriors.

Disregarding Porter's protestations, they sprung forward, and a minute later cut Ned loose from the stake and placed his weapons in his hands.

Quickly Ned leaped to his horse, near by.

Porter saw the action, and also that, under the existing circumstances, he had no need to expect aid from the savages. He therefore sprung upon his own horse, and headed him back for Cheyenne, at breakneck speed, Ned following not far in the rear, but just out of good rifle range.

If there was one thing above another of Porter's, that was deserving of praise. it was his horse, which was a large, powerful and flery animal, and capable of even greater speed than Ned's own, as he became aware, when he saw

his enemy rapidly leaving him behind.

There was no help for it, however, as neither he nor his horse were fully rested yet, and the latter had not had much to eat since leaving Cheyenne. To attempt to overhaul the renegade was easier contemplated than done, and so, as soon as Ned saw Porter's gain, he slackened his own horse's gait, and journeyed along more leisurely. He believed Porter would, on arriving at Cheyenne, take the first train Eastward. But in this he was greatly mistaken.

On arrival at Cheyenne, himself, he was at once placed under arrest. But it was only for a few days, as it was easily proven that he was in no way connected with Foster's death—the proof coming through Gus Porter, who was wounded to death, in a gambling dispute, and on his dying bed, made a confession which freed young Harris, and implicated himself in

the crime.

Spring once more dawned, ere Ned Harris had any more adventures worthy of narration.

About the first of May he was called upon by deputy U. S. marshal, who offered him, through government authority, a job of going into Indian territory, to ferret out the truth of a report that a band of whites had invaded the red-skins' wilderness-home, to colonize and mine.

Ned accepted the offer, and at once set out on his journey. Although armed with official papers that would protect him from trouble from the Indian agents, should he be discovered, his journey was to be strictly a secret one from everyone, as there were expectations that a thorough, but secret investigation would implicate some of the Government's own employees.

We will pass over the first part of Ned's journey, as it was attended with no incident worthy of mention, until he was well in the land of the red-man, where the pale-face is forbidden the freedom by Uncle Sam.

As a matter of course, Ned had not brought his horse with him into the Indian territory, but turned it out to graze beyond the border line.

A horse was useful, but at the same time made a trail which the red-skins could easily follow, so Ned concluded to be bothered with covering only the trail his own feet made.

Somewhere near fifty miles south of the middle of the northern line of the territory, the deputy marshal had advised him, he would find a small timbered swamp, in the center of which was a lake.

Near the swamp were rocky hills, wherein gold and silver deposits were supposed to abound and it was the marshal's opinion that near this lake the colony would locate, using the labyrinths of the swamp for shelter, should an attempt be made to rout them out of the terri-

One starry, moonlight night when camped was yet some ten miles at least from the swamp, Ned saw a hors and rider coming

soward him from the south.

When first discovered by Ned, they were

several miles away, and he could make out nothing except the outline of the horse and rider; but as they drew nearer, he saw that the rider was a girl of about his own age, and most strikingly pretty in face and figure. Her attire, though common, was neat fitting. rode with the easy grace of an experienced equestrienne. Upon her head she wore a jaunty white sombrero.

She was armed with a light sporting rifle and revolver, and looked as if she were not afraid to use them if emergency necessitated.

She rode fearlessly up to where Ned stood leaning upon his own trusty weapon, awaiting to receive her, her keen eyes scrutinizing him with curiosity.

"Good-evening!" she accosted, promptly rawing rein. "May I inquire who you are?" drawing rein. "May I inquire who you are?"
"Very likely, if you feel so disposed," Ned

replied, coolly.
"Well, who are you then, Mister Pert?" the girl demanded, with full as much composure. White fellers like you ain't generally seen wandering around Injun territory, here, name-

"Probably not. My name is Ned Harris, at

your service."

"And you came here in behalf of the Government?"

"Pshaw! To get out of the reach of the Government, you had better say!" Ned replied, with a laugh. "It won't be healthy for me to

be caught hereabouts, you can bet."

The girl scrutinized him still more narrowly, as if to read him through and through, but him was a face that one could not learn much from,

"Well, if that's the case, you're not the chap I'm looking for I am Kansas Kate, and I'm looking for a Government spy, who is also looking for me. It's quite possible you are the

"Oh, yes—quite!" Ned retorted, "though I'll take my oath I never saw or heard of you before. Haven't seen any Indians around, have

you?"

"Well, no. They don't trouble these parts very much, except in the hunting season. Where's your horse?"

Ned pointed to his feet with a grin.

"Reckon that's the only team I have in harness," he answered. "By the way, if you've got any jerked venison in your saddle-bags, s'posin' you share. I'm as hungry as a bear."

Kansas Kato complied with his request, and

then dismounted. She evidently intended to

make a stay over night.

After picketing out her horse, she seated herself composedly upon the ground, and joined company with Ned, in nibbling a piece of the hard dried venison.

"Guess you've been up to some mischief extraordinary tough, ain't you, that you have to take to these parts?" she asked, eying him

askance.

"Waal, I s'pect thar's more rope awaitin' me than I've got throat to accommodate," Ned assured her. "If it ain't any of my business, what are you doing here in Uncle Sam's Injun reserve?"

"Oh, I'm here on business. What that busihess is ain't none of vour business," delivered with emphasis, and within his mind Ned had already formed an idea that Kansas Kate belonged to the party for which he was in search.

If so, she had come to meet him-and kill

him?

He hardly believed that, yet so many fair women turn out fiends that his mind was made up that it might be very well to keep a close watch upon Kate from Kansas.

But a little desultory conversation followed the girl's emphatic declaration; then she took her saddle for a pillow, wrapped a blanket

around her and lay down.

Selecting a spot at a distance of several yards from her, Ned also lay down, but not to sleep, although his eyes were nearly closed, and he feigned slumber by heavy breathing.

Toward midnight he saw Kansas Kate

stealthily arise and saddle her horse.

What did it mean?

Was she going to take a quiet departure? and

if so, what was her object?

While she had her face from him, Ned quietly raised his head, and lay looking at her, a pair of six-shooters in his hands.

When she turned around and gazed toward him, she uttered a flerce cry, and raised her

rifle quickly to her shoulder.

She fired at the same time that Ned did, the

two reports blending into one.

With a cry she fell back to the ground, as also did Ned, for her bullet had taken effect in his bare shoulder, causing intense pain and a steady flow of blood,

Between them, as they had now fallen, arose a little knoll that hid them from each other's

view, even when a ruming a sitting posture.

Hearing no sound on the part of the strange girl, Ned concluded say was either stunned or dead, and so set about dressing his own wound,

which he had fears might prove serious.

Having some salt in his pocket, he soon had the flow of blood in a measure stanched, and by examination judged that the bullet had passed through no vital part, but had lodged in the muscles of the showlder. Unless inflammation set in it was not likely to give him much trouble, and as the blood had nearly stopped, he felt quite like his usual self again.

After listening for some time he at last heard Kansas Kate move on the other side of the

"Hello!" he showted; "are you dead?"
"Not much, though I'm badly hit," she replied, grimly. 'How are you feeling, your self?"

"Oh! fair to middling, since I stopped the bood. 1 s'pose it's war 'twixt you and me now, isn't it!"

"Of course! Just pop your head above the top of that knoll and I will shoot it off for you."
"Thank you. I can't spare it yet. How did

you leave the squatters at the swamp lake?"
"All well. Sou didn't deceive me."

"I presume not. You came over here to kill

"Yes. I had no other choice."

"How so?"

"It was s. matter of life and death to me. Jack McCoy threatened to kill me and send the boodhounds after me if I refused to obey ortone"

"He's your boss, eh?"

"I have been his captive for two years."

"Why don't you desert?"
"I dare not! He would follow me to the end of the earth, but what he'd kill me."

"Bah! the government will 'tend to his case. What do you say to accompanying me back to Cheyenne and making evidence that will cause the authorities to arrest the invaders and pay you well?"

The girl was silent a moment.

"I've often thought of it, since McCoy has made me his slave, but he is so terrible a brute in ev rything else except his respect for my honor that I am afraid to break away."

"Have no fears. If you go back to Cheyenne I'll send you East, in good circumstances, where I'll guarantee you'll never hear from him."

Later a bargain was struck to that effect, and the next hour saw Ned and Kansas Kate en

route.

They arrived safely at Cheyenne, and Kate. as promised, gave evidence that subsequently caused the expulsion of several bands of invaders from the Indian territory.

True to his word, Ned paid her fare East, and

once, a few years later, heard from her, that she was married and doing well. For his services Ned got the promise of a deputy marshalship (which in after years he got). but other incidents of a strange nature soon threw him into a current on which he drifted or was driven into outlawry and crime against his fellow-man.

#### CHAPTER XV.

### CONCLUSION.

THE next year in the life of Ned Harris passed without the usual routine of adventures that had previously characterized his exist-

But on the following spring, when the first tides of emigration began to pour into the Black Hills, in search of golden treasure which was known to exist there in unprecedented quanti-ties, Ned was once more in "business."

Having gained a good bit of knowledge of the country lying between Cheyenne and the Black Hills, he was able to guide Deadwood-bound trains into the fast-developing wilderness.

And now began a new siege of the enemy against him-his Eastern foe, Alex Filmore!

Scarcely a week passed by that did not bring against him, in some manner or shape, an attack from some one of Filmore's agents, plenty of whom seemed to abound wherever Ned went.

On several occasions they laid plans that came near bringing Ned to the gallows, by implicating him in different doings of which he was wholly innocent.

But he had the good luck to clear himself, until there finally came a blow that was destined to turn the whole future course of his life.

It was in the month of June, and Ned had been located in Deadwood's rapidly building city about a month, engaged in putting up a shanty upon a claim for himself and Anita.

During this time he had fallen into the habit of paying visits to a miner's daughter, named by Dean—a pretty, hasomatica little as quette, who did not care a cent for Ned, more

She had a beau, however, in the person of a speculator named Col. Calker, on whom she seemed to dote, and whom she was wont to tell Ned she idolized.

Believing she only did this to tantalize him and draw him on, Ned paid no attention to his rival. But, not so with the colonel, for as soon as he learned that Ned was paying attention to Miss Dean, he stopped his youthful rival one day in the street. "See hyar, younker!" he said, in a ferocious,

blustering way, that was a part of his nature, "I hear you're tryin' to cut me out, over to

"You do?" Ned replied, inquiringly.

"Yas, I do," the colonel responded importantly: "an' I thought I'd just advise you that

if you don't want to die, you'd better quit!"
"Oh, my! you nearly take my breath away,
at the announcement," Ned observed, dryly.
"I suppose you mean to insinuate that if I don't step out and let you step in, you will teetotally annihilate me?"

"Exactly. I won't tolerate no one's meddling

in my love affairs!"

"Guess you'll have to hoe your own row," Ned declared. "I wasn't brought up in the woods to be skeart by a skunk, and I've the biggest kind of a notion that I shall court Molly Dean as long as it suits my majesty."
"Cuss my boots! D'ye mean this, boy?"
"You bet I do!" Ned assured.

"Then I'll slap your mouth up to a peak, young impudence!" and the brawny lover suited the action to the word, ere Ned could parry his blow.

Ned was staggered by the heavy slap, but not "downed," by any means, and sprung back upon the colonel, and dealt him a right-hander

between the eyes, that dropped him.

Of course this created a sensation, even in sensational Deadwood, for the colonel was one of the most important of the then "leading citizens," from the fact that he had a finger in nearly every speculative pie.

That night when Ned went to the Dean shanty to call upon Miss Molly, the door was slammed in his face, and that, too, in the presence of several persons, who chanced to be pas-

sing at the time.

Inwardly vowing to let that be a lesson to him to keep away from the female sex, thereafter, Ned turned away in chagrin, and was joked unmercifully by his acquaintances for getting the mitten.

The next morning, Colonel Calker was found murdered in his bed, and robbed of a large sum of money he had been seen to have on his per-

son, the night previous.

Suspicion at once attached to Ned, and he was visited by several inquisitive strangers, who he knew of course were detectives; but they failed to elicit any information from him.

He had a room-mate at his shanty in the person of a Methodist preacher, and was able to prove that he had not left his house, after dark, on the night of the murder.

This was probably all that saved him from being lynched, for the tide of public opinion and indignation was largely against him, and the town was governed by lynch law, in the fullest sense of the word. But he was not molested, although he was watchful and armed ready for emergency.

Several days later, he had occasion to visit Custer City, and on his return, did not reach Deadwood until in the small hours of night. Turning his horse out to graze, at the lower end of town, he started for his own shanty.

When near the Dean shanty, he was horrified by stumbling over the body of a dead woman, who lay stretched out at one side of the street. Bending over her and pulling a dagger from her bosom, he made the startling discovery that

it was Molly Dean!
She had only recently been killed, too. So great was Ned's horror and astonishment, that for several minutes he could not move; then the sound of rapidly approaching footsteps aroused him to a full sense of his situation.

Two men coming up had already spied him.

If he suffered himself to be caught he knew Molly's murder would be charged to him, and there could be only one result-he would get a hasty trial, and be lynched by the people.

Dropping the knife, he ran swiftly down the street, but he had not gone far when a half a dozen men sprung out in front of him, and although he fought them desperately, he was finally overpowered, and triumphantly borne off to the infant city's temporary jail, and a guard stationed on the outside to see that he did not escape until morning.

When all was quiet, Ned called the guard to enter the jail and fetch him a drink of water, in the mean time having wriggled himself out of his bonds. The man obeyed, when Ned sprung upon him, and dealt a blow that laid

him out insensible.

Arming himself with the guard's weapons, Ned then rushed from the jail, and ten minutes more was in his saddle, en route for Cheyenne, "a fugitive from justice."

Two days later he entered the Wyoming town only to be met with a crushing dis-

covery.

Anita, who had some time before gone to an acijoining town, to marry her lover, a man named Justin McKenzie, had returned to Cheyenne, stating that McKenzie bad deserted her because her brother was a murderer and

This nearly drove Ned wild, and imbittered him still more, so that from a brave, free-hearted youth he was turned into a stern,

relentless man.

Taking Anita with him, he fled once more back into the hills, but even here he was pursued by officers of the law, who arrested him and Anita, and set out for Deadwood.

But in the night they were halted by a band of masked road agents, whom the officers resisted desperately, and succeeded in killing their captain, for which they were immediately lynched, but Ned and Anita were taken back with the outlaws to their rendezvous.

Here they were kept several days, when they were visited one night by the lieutenant of the band, who offered Ned the captaincy, at the wish of the members, who were pleased with

Ned promptly refused, as he had no wish to wain his name with any more bad repute.

Accordingly, after promising not to betray those who had befriended him, he and Anita were given their liberty, with the reminder that the chance to assume the captaincy was still open to him, at any time he might be forced to fly from the vengeance of the law.

From that time he dodged about through the

hills, a fugitive.

In a dozen places did he and Anita secrete themselves, and stake out little claims, only to be ferreted out by the officers and forced to

take to flight to save their lives.

Finally, it was no matter of wonder that the hunted youth became reckless and revengeful, and took measures to baffle the minions of the law, who were so ready to raise hands against him.

Little by little he gained notoriety as a lawdefier, whom it was not easy to take, until at last he assumed the name of Deadwood Dick, and hurled defiance in the faces of all who sought to molest him. Little by little he was driven back into the hills until he had to seek shelter in the road-agents' rendezvous, and desperate and despairing, he accepted their overtures to become their captain, and rode at their head in many an exciting adventure.

It is not our purpose to rehearse these adven-

tures, as they already are in print.

But an incident may not be amiss, as illustrating how the young brave retaliated for the constant attempts that were made to crush him out of existence, not alone by his Eastern foe, but also by the people:

Not many miles from the road-agents' rendezvous, as the crow flies, had sprung up a little mining-camp, known as Bullion City, which in all boasted of not over fifty people, and they

of the roughest class.

One day one of Dick's couriers came into the retreat, with the announcement that plaeards had been posted up, all around Bullion, offering five hundred dollars reward for the arof Deadwood Dick.

The young captain smiled, and putting on Wh latest disguise-for he had many-he ordered his horse.

Just as the shades of evening had gathered, he rode into Bullion, dismounted, and entered the only "hotel."

It was a rude affair, boasting of a bar and several gaming tables, at which a few roughs were seated.

Leaping on top of a barrel, Dick held up to view one of the reward placards, and drew a plated six-shooter, from his belt.

"Gents!" he cried, "can you tell me where the chap is that offered this reward for the capture of Deadwood Dick?"

There was no answer, but one evil-looking fellow attempted to dodge out.

Before he could do so, Deadwood Dick fired. and the man dropped; then, without a word the Prince of the Road took his departure; no one offered to stop him.

Only a few weeks later, a grand descent was made upon the haunt of the band, really led by the two Filmores. It quickly ended, however, in their capture and their fate was what they most richly deserved-rope-the limb of a tree. They alone, villainous father and more villain ous son-were hung; the rest of the assailants were freed and sent away.

Although the outlawed New England boy made himself an unenviable reputation during his Black Hills campaign, it is pleasant to note that in later years Edward Harris by good deeds and stern probity of character in some measure atoned for his fate-driven past.

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